REGIONALISM IN POST-SUHARTO INDONESIA

Edited by

Maribeth Erb, Priyambudi Sulistiyanto and Carole Faucher

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Regionalism in Post-Suharto Indonesia

Since the fall of the Suharto regime, forces pressing for regional autonomy have strengthened in Indonesia, with some people arguing that the country is in danger of disintegrating. This book examines a range of issues connected with decentralization and regional autonomy in Indonesia, especially focusing on various local contexts. The multiple issues that are dealt with in this volume include: ethnic revival and violence; corruption, collusion and nepotism; the complexities of administrative reorganization and the forging of new networks; the reshaping of cultural identity; new emerging social hierarchies; and new conflicts over the use of the environment.

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To those in Indonesia who strive
for democracy and social justice

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The T-shirt, depicted on the cover and in chapter one was designed by Mus Wanggut and friends of his in Jakarta. It was photographed by Professor Reynaldo Ileto, currently the Coordinator of the Southeast Asian Studies Programme. Thanks to Mus for permission to use his T-shirt as an illustration in this text, and for many of his insights into regional autonomy in Indonesia. To Mus, and those like him who struggle for democracy and social justice in Indonesia, we dedicate this volume.

Abbreviations

ABRI	Angjatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia; the Indonesian Armed Forces
APKASI	Indonesian Association of District Governments
Asprida	Yayasan Primasaeri Desa; an NGO in Ruteng, Flores
Babinsa	Bintara Pembina Desa; Village Development non-commissioned officers
Banpres	Bantuan Presiden; Presidential Funds
Bappeda	Badan Perencanaan Daerah; Regional Planning Board
Bappenas	Badan Perencanaan Nasional; National Planning Board
BPD	Badan Perwakilan Desa; Village Representative Body
BP3KR	Badan Persiapan Pembentukan Propinsi Kepri; Agency for Preparing the Establishment of Kepri Province
DAU	Dana Alokasi Umum, Public Allocation Funds
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat; National Parliament
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah; District or Regional Parliament
FKPM	Forum Komunikasi Pemuda Melayu; Communication Forum of Malay Youth
Golkar	Golongan Karya; official political party
HANKAMRATA	Pertahanan Rakyat Semesta; Total War
HPH	Hak Pengembangan Hutan; Forestry Concession Rights
HPHH	Hak Pengelolaan Hasil Hutan; Forest Product Utilization Rights
HPHTI	Hak Pengusahaan Hutan Tanaman Industri; Industrial Plantation Forest Concession
HTI	Hutan Tanaman Industri; Industrial Forest/Plantation Forest Companies

IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IKAMADA	Ikatan Keluarga Manggarai Djakarta; Association of Jakartan Manggaraian Families
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Inpres	Instruksi Presiden; Presidential Decrees
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IPMFFS	Integrated Pest Management Farmer Field School
IPPHTI	Ikatan Petani Pengendalian Hama Terpadu Indonesia; Indonesian Integrated Pest Management Farmers' Network
KAN	Kerapatan Adat Nagari; Minangkabau peoples' organization
KCI	Korean Consultant International
Kepri	Kepulauan Riau; Riau Islands
KIT	Kawasan Indonesia Timur, Eastern Indonesia Region
KKN	Korupsi, Kolusi and Nepotisme; Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism
KODAM	Komando Daerah Militer; Military territorial command
Korpri	Korps Pegawai Negeri; Civil Service Corps
KTNA	Kelompok Tani National Andalan; National Farmers' Association
KUD	Koperasi Unit Desa; Village Cooperatives
LPU	Lembaga Pemilihan Umum; Election Commission
LSM	Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat; Non-government organizations
MAMB	Majelis Adat dan Budaya Melayu; Malay Cultural and Customary Council
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat; People's Consultative Assembly
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NKRI	Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia; Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia
NTT	Nusa Tenggara Timur; Eastern Nusa Tenggara Province
PAD	Pendapatan Asli Daerah; Local-based revenues or Real Regional Income
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional; National Mandate Party
PDP	Provincial Development Programmes
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan; Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle

PHBM	Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat; Forestry Development in Collaboration with the Community
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa; National Awakening Party
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia; Indonesian Communist Party
PMDH	Pembangunan Masyrakyat Daerah Hutan; Development of the Forest Communities
PNI	Partai Nasional Indonesia; Indonesian Nationalist Party
PPP	Partai Persatuan Indonesia; Unity Development Party
PRD	Partai Rakyat Demokrat; Peoples' Democratic Party
SDM	Sumber Daya Manusia; Human Resources
SPC	Sumatra Promotion Centre
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia; Indonesian Military

1
Introduction
Entangled politics in post-Suharto Indonesia

Priyambudi Sulistiyanto and Maribeth Erb

Regionalism in a changing Indonesia

The regional autonomy laws of 1999 *(Undang-Undang Otonomi Daerah),*[1] that were implemented in January 2001, brought a great deal of hope to those people in Indonesia who had been crying out for reformation of the government and the laws of the land since well before the fall of the long-serving President Suharto in May 1998. The highly centralistic government of the New Order, which kept close control over the use of resources in the various regions in Indonesia, as well as political and economic developments of various kinds, was increasingly seen as exerting a stranglehold on the lives of the Indonesian people. Especially outside Java, there were many who felt that they had never really enjoyed the fruits of 30 years of New Order Development, but instead bore the brunt of corruption, collusion and nepotism from the centre.

The New Order regime emerged out of the chaos and massacres of 1965, following, reputedly, an 'attempted coup' by the Communist Party. Several months of massacres followed the claim that the communists were trying to take over Indonesia, and out of this threat and the ensuing chaos, was born a regime based on fear, and the created need for order and stability. Subsequently, the New Order government ruled, in what van Klinken characterizes very aptly as a 'state of emergency' (1999:62), for 32 years, where danger was believed to be ever present and where it was suspected that the masses hid potential enemies. The populace was also presented as a source of latent chaos and anarchy. The only hope for security, order and stability was a firm state and a highly centralized regime.

In an analysis of the New Order state through a number of 'keywords' or concepts, van Langenberg (1986) suggests that much of the legitimacy of the New Order was indeed based on its claim to be protecting people from the 'enemies of the state' (16), and the chaos and poverty of the preceding *Orde Lama* or Old Order of the first President Sukarno. Coupled with the *dwi-fungsi* of the military (its dual function as protecting the state against outsiders, as well as dangerous 'insiders'), and a bureaucratic system that ensured that all civil servants supported the government party Golkar, the New Order led by President Suharto

became firmly entrenched over a 32-year period (1966–98). Various laws, formulated ostensibly to 'deconcentrate' the power of the state to local regions and thus guarantee the unity of the state and nation, in fact worked to create a uniformity of bureaucracy that undermined much of the diversity of local political systems and any earlier claim to local control.[2] This worked to effectively focus all control on the 'centre', the *pusat,* which van Langenberg suggests is a keyword which 'identifies the territorial, bureaucratic and cultural centre of the state' (1986:12).

Anderson argues that this highly centralized philosophy finds its basis in a traditional Javanese one and is best characterized by a laser or a flashlight beam (1990:24), where a high concentration of light and power are found in the centre; any dispersal or diffusion of this highly centralized power was considered in Javanese philosophy to be evil or amoral. Given this particular philosophical background, one can understand the greater and greater concentration and accumulation of power in the centre during the development of the New Order to be a fulfilment of this Javanese concept of power. This 'concentration' and 'accumulation' of the New Order state, which van Langenberg (1986:23–5) suggests originally had a sense of equity and redistribution associated with it, became increasingly focused on several individuals—cronies and family members of the president—who controlled power and wealth through patronage links across the archipelago and created policies that worked in their favour. This accumulation and concentration of power increasingly caused dissatisfaction in the later years of the New Order. With the Asian financial crisis, which began in 1997 and which devastated the Indonesian *rupiah* and the Indonesian economy, eventually the legitimacy of the New Order was undermined and President Suharto was forced to step down.

In response to demands for reform, Suharto's successor, President Habibie, drafted laws no. 22/1999 and no. 25/1999 which would allow for power and wealth to become decentralized in a bid to satisfy the many who felt that they had been increasingly disenfranchised in the highly concentrated and centralized New Order system. These laws on regional autonomy or *otonomi daerah*—implemented in January 2001—allocated more power to make decisions to the *daerah,* in this case the regency *(kabupaten),* and legislated fiscal balance, where rights over profit from resources would be more fairly allocated to the various regions from which they originated.

Centralization versus decentralization: a brief Indonesian history

These recent policies for decentralization or regional autonomy need to be understood in a broader historical, political and legal setting. The question of whether Indonesia should be governed within a decentralized or centralized political structure is not a new one. The Dutch colonial government implemented 'limited' decentralization policies in 1903, 1905 and 1922 aiming to incorporate

both modern and traditional elements in managing centre-region relations throughout Indonesia (Legge 1961:5–6). This structure was put in place, however, on the condition that the Governor-General in Batavia would have full control over the government and administrative institutions including leaders at both the national and regional levels. When the Dutch left Indonesia in 1942, the Japanese occupation government not only inherited an already centralized political structure, but they further strengthened it because of their concern to exploit natural resources and to mobilize people for Japan's war against the Allies.

When the Japanese left in 1945, the Indonesian leaders faced the immense task of rebuilding a country left in tatters by the war. Until 1949 Indonesia was still at war with The Netherlands, which had attempted to take it back as a colony after World War II. Despite being still at war, the newly formed government took on the task of attempting to form a system of governance. One of the most important tasks was finding a model for managing the relationship between the centre and regions. At that point, a unitary model was preferred by the founding fathers. However, the desire to give more freedom to the regions to run their own affairs was also prominent. This desire was stated in Article 18 of the 1945 Constitution, allowing the regions to run their own affairs under a unitary system. In other words, decentralization has a constitutional foundation in Indonesia.

During the early independence period, the government introduced law no. 1/ 1945 and law no. 22/1948, aiming to create a model for centre-region relations that would give more freedom to the regions to run their own affairs (Legge 1961: 26). Ironically, these laws failed to be implemented effectively because of Jakarta's lack of power and due to the political uncertainty resulting from the war of independence (see Kahin 1985).

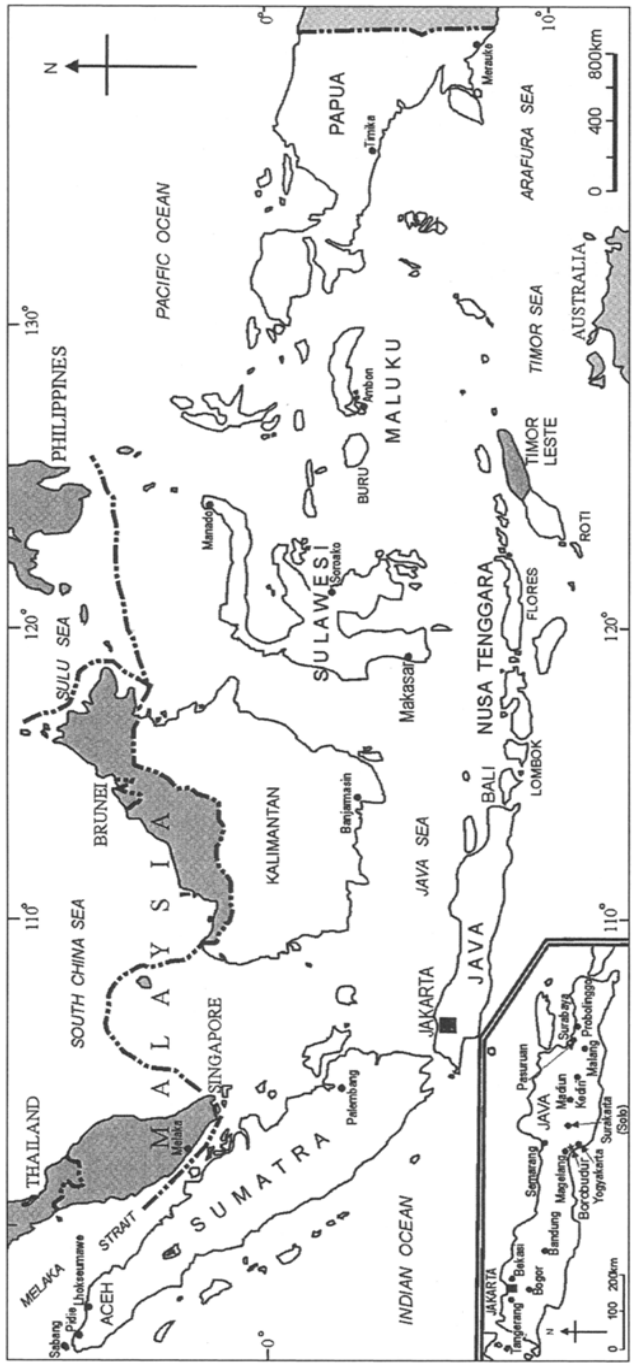
It must be pointed out that these laws were introduced within the ongoing debate over which model of local governance would best suit Indonesia. Two models were discussed during this very crucial period: a unitary system and a federal one. The first was supported by the de facto republican leaders such as Sukarno, Hatta and also military leaders. Their view was that because Indonesia is a diverse society in terms of people and culture, and is also an archipelagic nation, a unitary system with a strong government in the centre was important. The alternative, federalist model was supported by those who lived in the former Dutch-created United States of Indonesia. Their view was that the unity of Indonesia could only be preserved if it adopted a system of governance which would allow the regions to establish their own government and administrative institutions (Legge 1961:7– 8). When the war ended and the Dutch finally left Indonesia at the end of 1949, strong opposition to a federal system grew because this was the system that had originally been imposed by the Dutch and hence it was seen as a part of the Dutch strategy to destroy the unity of Indonesia. The perceived colonial roots of federalism have left a bad taste for any constructive debate about the strengths and weaknesses of a federal system in Indonesia since then (Feith 1962:58–9).

During the parliamentary democracy period in the 1950s, Indonesia experienced an exciting but also confusing period. It was in this period that decentralization was rejuvenated. Jakarta introduced law no. 1/1957 on local governance *(pemerintahan daerah),* which gave more freedom to the regions to run their own affairs including electing their own leaders and managing their own money (Legge 1961:27; Syaukani *et al.* 2002:73–4). However, law no. 1/1957 was implemented in the midst of political uncertainty and repeated collapses of the parliamentary government in Jakarta, which created a sense of disunity and political instability in Indonesia. The intense ideological conflicts among major political parties, combined with regionally based rebellions orchestrated by local military commanders—especially those in West Sumatra and South Sulawesi—made it impossible for Jakarta to implement law no. 1/1957.

It was in this political setting that Sukarno declared a state of emergency in 1959, ending the parliamentary democracy period in Indonesia (Bouchier and Legge 1994). With the return to the 1945 constitution, parliament was abolished and the legal decisions of the parliament, including law no. 1/1957, were no longer valid. With this, Jakarta's willingness to support decentralization came to an end. Indonesia then returned to a centralist political system, a system that Sukarno and the military believed could serve the unity of Indonesia (Legge 1961:204). During this, so-called Guided Democracy period (1959–65), Sukarno governed Indonesia in a dictatorial fashion, styling himself as the 'father' of the Indonesian nation. Sukarno used every way and means to assert Jakarta's dominance over the regions.

The truth of the events of 30 September 1965 is still shrouded in mystery, but nine generals were killed in what was staged to look like a coup attempt. This led to the fall of Sukarno and the scapegoating of the PKI, the Indonesian Communist Party. Chaos, a state of emergency and fear thus overshadowed the political transition from Sukarno to Suharto (Crouch 1978:97–134). Sukarno had been considered by many in the 'First World' as being too sympathetic to communism. His fall marked a change in the direction of Indonesian foreign relations and a period, as mentioned earlier, when communism and communists were demonized and the violence and trauma of those events were kept alive (Heryanto 1999).

Major-General Suharto stepped in to establish the New Order government in 1966 with support from the military (especially the army), the middle class and elements within the Islamic community. From his military background, Suharto was familiar with centralization and the idea of having a strong government in Jakarta appealed to him. This kind of government was needed in order to accomplish Suharto's immediate tasks in the early days of his power: providing political stability and rehabilitating the Indonesian economy. Suharto established a centralistic political structure in which he had full control over three important institutions: the military, the bureaucracy (especially the Ministry of Home Affairs) and the ruling party Golkar *(Golongan Karya)*. Through these



Map 1.1 Indonesia.

institutions, Suharto also established a system of political patronage linking him directly with political leaders in the regions. In addition, Suharto used the state philosophy of *Pancasila* (ironically created by Sukarno) as the ideological basis for the New Order. *Pancasila* comprises five principles:

- belief in one God *(ketuhanan yang maha esa);*
- humanitarianism *(kemanusiaan yang beradab);*
- the unitary state *(negara persatuan);*
- representation and consensus *(permusyawaratan dan perwakilan);* and
- social justice *(keadilan sosial)*.

At the rural level, Suharto created his own channels through which he could deliver presidential funds (known as *Bantuan Presiden—Banpres*) directly to farmers throughout Indonesia as a way of rewarding those loyal to him in Jakarta.

In order to strengthen Jakarta's grip over power in the regions, the New Order government introduced law no. 5/1974 on local governance *(pemerintahan daerah)* and later law no. 5/1979 on village governance *(pemerintahan desa)*. The first introduced 'limited' decentralization while preserving the unitary system. It introduced a model of local governance in which Jakarta—especially the President and the Ministry of Home Affairs, *Departemen Dalam Negeri*—had power of veto over the appointment of provincial and district heads and also over the allocation of financial resources to the regions. Law no. 5/1979 aimed to ensure that there was a uniformity of governance structure at the village level across Indonesia. These two laws basically denied the rights of the regions to manage their own affairs.

As Indonesia became politically stable and entered the economic boom period of the 1980s and 1990s, the people and leaders of rich regions such as Riau, East Kalimantan, Aceh and then Irian Jaya, started to dispute Jakarta's excessive role in their local affairs. The highly centralized political system, increasingly controlled by a small inner circle of elites in Jakarta, had left many people in the regions feeling frustrated, uneasy or angry about the strongly centralized state control, especially in terms of developmental decisions and economic benefits. Tensions between Jakarta and the regions raised serious concerns among elites in Jakarta.

Decentralization finally gained wider political support in the lead up to the downfall of President Suharto in May 1998. (For assessments of the fall of Suharto, see Forrester and May 1998; Aspinall *et al.* 1999; Budiman *et al.* 1999; Emmerson 1999). In fact, decentralization was an important part of the reform agenda proposed by the pro-reform camp in Indonesia. It was under Habibie's transitional government that the highly centralized political system was gradually dismantled. Within 11 months in office, Habibie introduced a series of political reforms, including releasing political prisoners (although not all), creating a new electoral system, adopting human rights principles, allowing press freedom and

also introducing two decentralization laws (see Erb and Adams 2000; Manning and van Diermen 2000; Kingsbury and Budiman 2001).

The national consensus on giving more freedom to the regions to run their own affairs came about in the Peoples' Consultative Assembly meeting in October 1998. Habibie responded to it by establishing a small team known as the Team of Ten *(Tim Sepuluh),* headed by Ryaas Rasyid, a leading proponent of decentralization. Within a short time and without much public consultation, the team was able to draft law no. 22/1999 on local governance and law no. 25/1999 on fiscal balance between the central government and the regions. When the parliament finally enacted these laws without much opposition in the middle of 1999, there was a sense of optimism that Indonesia, having the opportunity once again to move toward decentralization after it having been denied during the Sukarno and Suharto periods, would be able to successfully build a more democratic political system. To a certain extent, this optimism came from the fact that the issue of decentralization reappeared together with the return of a more democratic political system in Indonesia.

During the Abdurrahman Wahid administration (1999–2001) law no. 22/1999 and law no. 25/1999 were introduced to the public, with the deadline for implementation of these laws set for January 2001. During this period, there was intense debate among the political players in Jakarta about the merits and demerits of decentralization (see Smith 2001; Barton 2002; Robinson and Bessel 2002). One of the most important players was the Ministry of Home Affairs. As mentioned earlier, this ministry had been the bastion of the unitary system and was controlled by powerful civilian bureaucrats and ex-military personnel. With the implementation of law no. 22/1999 and law no. 25/1999, the role of the Ministry of Home Affairs would be limited, and thus not everyone within the ministry was happy about it. Decentralization would require the transfer of governance from Jakarta to the regions, thus dismantling the privileges that had been enjoyed by the ministry in the past.

The rise of President Megawati in 2001 influenced the way in which Jakarta implemented decentralization. Megawati has the strong nationalistic view that the unity of Indonesia *(Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia, NKRI)* must be preserved. Therefore, she would not hesitate to reverse the policies of decentralization if they were to endanger the unity of Indonesia. Megawati's view is also shared by the Minister of Home Affairs, Hari Sabarno, a former military general, who has been very critical of the policies of decentralization in Indonesia. It is in this context that the idea of revising law no. 22/1999 and law no. 25/1999 is frequently debated among political players in Jakarta.

As we shall see in the chapters that follow, the story of decentralization in Indonesia continues to unfold. The implications of decentralization are still being studied (for instance, see Aspinall and Fealy 2003; Kingsbury and Aveling 2003). However, there are some important issues regarding decentralization in post-Suharto Indonesia that deserve attention here. First, the move toward decentralization has changed the features of Indonesian politics not only in terms

of the dynamics of the relationship between Jakarta and the regions but also in terms of the dynamics between the regions themselves. Both Jakarta and the regions have to reorganize and rearrange the nature of the relationship, away from a top-down to a more give-and-take kind of relationship. This becomes more complicated as it involves more political players and various formal and informal political institutions in both Jakarta and the regions. It is in this context that we have seen accommodation, resistance and opposition occurring in Jakarta and the regions as decentralization is accepted as a new reality in post-Suharto Indonesia.

The decentralization process also raises serious concerns regarding the neo-liberal agenda advocated by the coalition of domestic-based pro-reform camps and those of the Western countries and multilateral institutions—such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme—that have poured funding and technical assistance into decentralization-related programmes in Indonesia. These multilateral institutions see decentralization as part of a global democratization process that started during the 1990s and have their own interests to pursue in ensuring that decentralization is continued and is 'on track'.

Decentralization in Indonesia has been implemented together with other reforms and some of the ideas underpinning these reforms originated in the multilateral institutions mentioned above. Among these is the move to build a new legal framework and new institutions, to improve 'capacity building' as a prerequisite for decentralization, so that the transfer of power, rights and responsibilities away from Jakarta to the regions will be enhanced by a strong legal and institutional base. However, external assistance is not always welcome, because political actors in both Jakarta and the regions have their own interests to pursue and to protect, which may not coincide with the agenda of these multilateral institutions.

It is thus important to see the question of regionalism in Indonesia against a past history of varying laws that centralized and decentralized various powers, as well as the unfolding relations that are important in a global arena, all of which are coloured by the agendas of different actors and their varying interpretations of 'democracy', 'freedom' and 'rights'.

Decentralization and democracy: hope or entangled mess?

> The regional autonomy law no. 22/1999 is actually an opportunity for the people to reshape their lives based on their own histories, roots, origins and traditions. However, it turns out that the spirit of the government that exists in the regions is still stuck in law no. 5/1979, not 22/1999. Hence what we see is *mbili mbolot* (an entangled mess)
>
> Interview with Mus Wanggut,

activist and director, Asprida, Ruteng, Flores, NTT, July 2003

The chapters in this volume address some of the variations in and problems of regional autonomy in Indonesia that were discussed in a seminar in May 2002 in Singapore, attended primarily by scholars from three institutions: the National University of Singapore, the University of Indonesia, and the French Centre for Scientific Research (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, CNRS). Other invitees included people from political centres and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Jakarta and Yogyakarta who have been concerned with the issues of democratization and decentralization from the point of view of policy and the public. Participants were enthusiastic about the positive potentials of regional autonomy, but also had a number of negative things to say about the effects that the implementation of regional autonomy seemed to be having, and could potentially have as time went on, if these problems were not carefully addressed. Rampant corruption; the increasing oppression of women in various regencies; the emergence of violence between various groups based on affiliations associated with culture or religion; the sometimes violent struggles over land rights; as well as the increasing level of culture-centric/ ethnocentric decisions that have potential for further struggles and violence, are just some of the problems that have surfaced in the still young regional autonomy era.

The chapters presented here, most of them emerging from that workshop, present these mixed views, both positive and negative, of the regionalization process in Indonesia over the past three years, and describe what the authors perceive as the problems and potentials that these political changes offer. What have emerged as the key areas of concern in this book are the questions of continuities with the old regime; the relationship between democracy and decentralization; the relationship between regionalization and localization; the changing configurations of culture and identity in connection with these localizing and regionalizing processes; and the connections between these localizing processes and globalization. These chapters challenge some of the assumptions that democracy of a liberal kind will automatically follow from decentralization, and that regionalization or autonomy means democracy and empowerment of local communities. The assumption also that globalization coupled with democracy will lead to community empowerment and prosperity is also challenged.

'Decentralization', as Davidson points out in Chapter 10, is often viewed in 'an idealized light'; political scientists mostly do not recognize the potentially 'dark sides', the decentralization of corruption, the outbreak of xenophobic violence, and the oppression of local communities by zealous power-hungry politicians. As Mus Wanggut (quoted above) says, the people, perhaps especially the 'little people' of Indonesia, had great hopes with the enactment of the regional autonomy laws that they would be able to reclaim some of their cultural and social autonomy, which had been greatly affected by policies and laws of the New Order. Instead it seems that in many cases the new laws have made things worse for the workers, farmers and villagers of reformation Indonesia. As Hadiz

points out (Chapter 3) it is not enough that people refuse to live in the old way, but it must be made so that the old forces are unable to continue to wield power. In Indonesia it is clear that many of the old forces are still wielding power, in new guises, and closer to the people, which means that sometimes what is supposed to be a process of 'democratization' ends up being more stifling than the old centralistic era where power was focused in the centre. As Hadiz suggests, part of this has to do with the way reform has been shaped, so that those in power and those interests that were dominant in the New Order can reconstitute themselves and survive in a new form. What this means for empowerment and autonomy is that only some people enjoy the fruits of so-called 'democratization', while others may end up being, in some ways, more repressed than before. The spread of corrupt, collusive and cronyistic practices to the regions means that people who do not have money or connections cannot be empowered. Hence the spread of 'money politics', as Hadiz shows, drastically inhibits the process of democratization.

Examples of these kinds of problems abound in this book. In Manggarai, in Western Flores, in the eastern province of Nusa Tenggara Timur, some people in that regency told one of the authors that it seems the people have not gained autonomy at all. It appears to be only the *bupati* (regent) who can act autonomously in this new era, and because of this he claims to be a 'king'. Hence many activist groups have sprung up in the Manggaraian capital to fight the depredations of the regional autonomy government: the taking over of land, which has long belonged to the people, in the name of 're-greening' the forests; the closing off of traditional fishing grounds in the name of conservation and eco-tourism; the rampant corruption that has penetrated further and with greater force into the bureaucracy of autonomy than it seems ever to have done in the New Order era. As one old man said, 'The *bupati* seems to have too much autonomy'.

A T-shirt produced by the NGO *Yaysan Primarsari Desa*—which is located in the capital of the Manggaraian regency, Ruteng—sums up the frustration of many people about regional autonomy *(otonomi daerah)*. Entitled *'OTONOMI DAERAH: Mbili Mbolot',* it pictures a fat rat, wearing a suit, grabbing the symbol of Indonesia, a golden Garuda, which has been captured in a net and is breaking apart (see Fig. 1.1). The string that ties the net at the top bears a label which reads *otonomi daerah*. The fat rat is clearly a government official, since he wears a suit and tie. He has behind him a chair, which he no longer sits in, meant to symbolize his position and responsibility in the government that he has forsaken. Underneath is written 'A portrait of the exploitation of natural resources in Indonesia via a new style law of the jungle'.[3]

Mbili mbolot is an expression in the Manggaraian language referring to a situation where there are so many problems overlapping and entangled that it seems impossible to solve them and to get out of the mess. This expression is often exclaimed in anger and frustration if a problem cannot be solved. If a rope is entangled *(mbolot)* so much that it is *mbili mbolot* (a mass of tangles), there is no point in trying to unknot it, 'just burn it' *(bakar saja)*. This expression neatly

Figure 1.1 Mbili Mbolot—An entangled mess, T-shirt designed by Mus Wanggut.

summarizes the anger and frustration of many people in Manggarai toward what has resulted from the new autonomy laws: that is the government acting highly irresponsibly and officials concerned with their own enrichment, indifferent to the destruction of the environment, the country and the populace for whom they are responsible. It is not surprising therefore that various incidents of violence have broken out in Flores, as elsewhere in Indonesia, sometimes specifically as an expression of this frustration.[4]

It is these various 'entanglements' of regional autonomy and the way they are dealt with in various places and various institutions in Indonesia that are the focus of this book. The first part deals with understanding the politics of regional autonomy. The chapters in Part I explore the history of the decisions associated

with creating and implementing a process of decentralization and democratization in Indonesia, as well as some of the widespread implications politically, economically and geographically of these new laws.

In Chapter 2, 'Exercising freedom', Pratikno gives us some of the historical background of politics in Indonesia from which to understand the demand for regional autonomy and the difficulties associated with its implementation. He suggests that the increase in local autonomy associated with decentralization must be coupled with democratization. It is the process of democratization which has become a stumbling block to regional autonomy in Indonesia. It is not the laws and the system of regional autonomy per se that are the problem, but the way local actors implement it in their own regions. By ignoring 'democracy', that is the real involvement of the people in the choosing of leaders and the creation of policies, local autonomy can end up being more corrupt and exploitative than the highly centralized government of the New Order. Pratikno, therefore, is supportive of regional autonomy, and tends toward an optimistic view that the problems associated with decentralization in the present can be overcome.

The following three chapters are not as optimistic as Pratikno's and explore problems of corruption in Indonesia and how this has continued from the past into the present. In Chapter 3, 'Reorganizing political power in Indonesia', Hadiz explains some of the processes associated with power brokering in the early reform era and looks at how the old interest groups of the New Order have struggled to reshape themselves and maintain power in a new climate. He uses the cases of Yogyakarta and North Sumatra to show how the political brokering that has been taking place at the local levels mirrors that at the national level, with different parties trying to position themselves in strategic ways in the regional autonomy era. What he calls 'political thuggery' and 'money politics' has blossomed in an era where local political positions are particularly important ways of gaining power and wealth. Ultimately he questions whether or not it can be claimed that Indonesia is going through a 'democratic transition' and will eventually emerge triumphant as a liberal democracy, or whether it will emerge as something else. Syarif Hidayat's paper on 'Hidden autonomy' (Chapter 4), also using examples from Java and Sumatra, shows us that these processes are a reshaping and a continuation of the so called 'autonomous' practices of powerful politicians of the New Order era, who used money and connections to place themselves in a position where they could benefit. He also ultimately questions the likelihood that regional autonomy will make Indonesia a more democratic place, since he argues that the understandings that elites have of 'autonomy' are different from that which was originally intended in the introduction of the regional autonomy laws. The continuation of practices that focus on enrichment, rather than distribution of power and social justice, certainly calls into question real societal change.

A similar pessimism is present in Sukardi Rinakit's chapter, 'Decentralization and the military'. Rinakit highlights for us the important role that the military has had in the politics and power brokering of New Order Indonesia, and shows how

it is resistant to resigning this role in the regional autonomy era, although reformation and decentralization demands that this be so. As Rinakit points out, the military is still supportive of the very centralistic, Javanese philosophy of the New Order—as described by Anderson (1990). In the minds of military officers a strong state is a highly concentrated centralized one; anything else threatens the unity of the nation which the military is sworn to protect. Their real hidden agendas, however, Rinakit suggests, have very much more to do with protecting their business and power interests, which are threatened by decentralization. His chapter is an important one, given the unfolding election results of April 2004, which seem to indicate a military comeback, and the increase in popular sentiment favouring a strong military leader in Indonesia in the run-up to the 2004 direct presidential election.

In short Hadiz, Hidayat and Rinakit offer us chapters that explore the power brokering and machinations that have characterized, and continue to characterize, Indonesian politics and question whether we can say that much in Indonesia has really changed, or will change in the years to come, despite the introduction of decentralization laws and policies.

The last chapter of the first section, from Muriel Charras, gives us an overview of the politics of the New Order and the transformations in the regional autonomy era from the perspective of a geographer with long time experience in the archipelago. 'The reshaping of the Indonesian archipelago after 50 years of regional imbalance' shows us how the centralization of the New Order era was highly destructive and inhibiting to the 'outer islands' of Indonesia, those parts 'not Java', and like Pratikno's paper, tends to hold a positive, optimistic view of what decentralization can mean for these downtrodden regions of Indonesia. Charras' vision includes her own unique ruminations on how some regions are re-conforming themselves into areas that can work together, instead of dividing and competing in a negative ethnocentric fashion as many other authors have suggested.

Part II, 'Conflicts over culture, identity and power' deals with concerns introduced in Charras' chapter—the questions of cultural autonomy and the issues of regions reforming themselves based on particular identities that are being reshaped and redefined in reaction to concerns about the implementation of the regional autonomy laws. The questions of 'culture' and 'roots' are not new issues among peoples in Indonesia, whose cultural identities have been, to a greater or lesser extent, shaped by Dutch colonialism, New Order policy and sometimes—as in the case of Bali discussed by Michel Picard—by tourism. But as Picard in his chapter '*Otonomi daerah* in Bali' suggests, new issues and problems are emerging in the regional autonomy era. For Bali, as Picard shows, the laws of autonomy create special problems. This is because Bali, as Charras also points out in her chapter, was originally created as a province because of cultural similarities throughout the island. Under the regional autonomy laws, it is the *kabupaten* which receive special status and powers, not the provinces; hence the hopes of Balinese to control their own fate, especially within tourism

developments and the presentation of their 'culture', have been upset by the division and competition that is occurring between *kabupaten* in the new regional autonomy era.

Just as *Kebalian,* or Balineseness, has emerged in the regional autonomy era with new problems attached, so it is the case as well with 'Malayness' in the Riau Archipelago, discussed by Carole Faucher in her chapter 'Regional autonomy, Malayness and power hierarchy in the Riau Archipelago'. Malayness is a highly contested category in Riau, associated with aristocracy and power, and Faucher explores how this category has been conceptualized historically and what configurations it has at present. In the new regional autonomy era, a new province, Kepri *(Kepulauan Riau)* is being created specifically to form a Malay province. This has become a matter of concern to Malay commoners, who cannot prove their ethnic affiliation through written genealogies as the aristocrats can, as well as for immigrants from outside the region, who increasingly vie with the Malays over the rich potential of the region. As Faucher shows, however, the young are starting to reject an identification as Malay, as well as some of the cultural associations which have been strong in the region. Malays, for example, have traditionally worked in the government and have not been involved in business like other ethnic groups. What is interesting about these young aristocratic Malays that she discusses is that they are choosing an entrepreneurial path, which they insist will be the only way to save Indonesia from perpetual crisis, and prefer to emphasize their Indonesian-ness, rejecting the association with a 'primordial' ethnic category. This is quite different from the way that others in the Riau Archipelago, as well as in other parts of Indonesia, seem to be relating to their cultural-ethnic identities.

Erb, Beni and Anggal in their chapter, 'Cultural identity in an era of regional autonomy' also suggest that regional autonomy is having an effect on ideas of cultural identity. They show how 'expatriate' Manggaraians, those who live outside of their homeland—especially in Jakarta—are starting to be concerned about their status as immigrants in a new era that seems to identify place strongly with identity. Because of this they are attempting to reshape Manggaraian culture, as they hope to return home and gain opportunities from the new decentralized era. One important way they can create a space for themselves is via their ethnic and cultural identity. Questions of culture therefore touch on issues of power: who has the power to shape tradition, maintain it and claim it. Power and culture in the Manggaraian case is interestingly spread over different localities and different levels of government. What was suggested in the other two chapters, that changing political boundaries—and the relationship of these boundaries to culture—have affected who has power and can wield it, is also presented in the Manggaraian case but in a slightly different way. The authors show how some people have come to question the ambiguity associated with the ideas of autonomy and the 'local', questioning who actually benefits when power gets decentralized. People in Manggarai are one group who seem to be suffering from an overly ambitious regent, who has taken a lot of the decentralization of

autonomy and power into his own hands. Is this, indeed, what a democratization process is supposed to be about?

The problem of *semangat kedaerahan sempit*—'narrow-minded regionalism', something which Picard mentions in his chapter as being condemned by President Megawati Sukarnoputri—is addressed by all the chapters in this part, but is most graphically discussed in Jamie Davidson's paper, 'Decentralization and regional violence in the post-Suharto state'. This 'narrow-minded regionalism' is said to be illustrated by the outbreaks of violence between peoples of different ethnic affiliations which have occurred in many parts of Indonesia since the fall of Suharto. As Davidson argues in his chapter, 'In democratic transitions, conflict is ubiquitous; violence is not', hence he sets out to try to explain why violence should have broken out in the particular areas that it has. Davidson's answer is that it is not necessarily 'narrow-minded ethnocentrism', but instead power struggles that have emerged at sub-national levels because of the changing political contexts of decentralization. He illustrates this in his chapter with the example of West Kalimantan and the ethnic conflicts among Dayaks, Malays and Madurese. Davidson tries to integrate an understanding of the political context as an explanation of this violence. He shows what some of the earlier papers suggested, that political struggles between elites, the military and big business interests, are some of the important factors that must be kept in mind when trying to understand what, on the surface, look like cultural-ethnic conflicts or narrow-minded regionalism.

Part III presents chapters that deal with issues of natural resource management and the environment. How have regional autonomy laws affected how people can utilize the resources of their own regions? These chapters indicate that many changes are being implemented in these areas. Yunita Winarto's chapter, 'Striving for self-governance and democracy', suggests that programmes that were begun under the New Order—to change the paradigm of the green revolution to free farmers from the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers—have gained considerable impetus in the regional autonomy era. Although many obstacles still remain, among them the farmers' own lack of confidence, the movement to reject outside technological manipulation of farming technology and implement an integrated pest management system is growing and strengthening nationwide. What Winarto points out is that, in the decentralized era, when regional governments and other organizations have the freedom to directly contact outside global agents of all kinds, the challenge will be to resist business interests that wish to use and manipulate Indonesian farmers.

Indonesian natural resources were unabashedly exploited during the New Order era by central government and multi-national interests from outside, without giving very much heed to local claims or interests. The decentralization associated with regional autonomy has meant that outside interests need to play a different game to get access to local resources, which becomes more complicated. As Semiarto Purwanto shows in his chapter, 'Forest resource management and self-governance in regional autonomy Indonesia', big business

must now contend with local village stakeholders who may end up having many different kinds of demands in order to allow access to their areas. Examples from various areas of Indonesia show, however, that the unbridled use of natural resources, despite the lip service paid to conservation, has not lessened, and instead may become potentially more destructive in this regional autonomy era.

The picture of regional autonomy overall, therefore, seems somewhat gloomy from the perspective of several years after its implementation. The 'road map' to decentralization and the ability of the people in different areas in Indonesia to be 'empowered' to make their own autonomous decisions about their political and economic lives seems to be full of entanglements and fraught with considerable danger. The question is even being asked, will Indonesia actually last long enough to be able to enjoy the 'fruits' of a decentralization process? Certainly many in Indonesia at the present moment query the need for a unitary state and the wisdom of keeping it so—both because of the multiple differences of the people within and because many see the system as so rampant with corruption that it will eventually lead to the destruction of the state and the country.

One very pessimistic point of view was relayed to Mus Wanggut, the activist whose quote began this section. A fisherman on a small island off the west coast of Flores was asked by a school teacher, who was testing his knowledge of the *Pancasila,* what the five principles *(sila)* were. This fisherman responded: The first *sila* is Sukarno, the second Suharto, the third Habibie, the fourth Gus Dur, the fifth Megawati and the sixth the dispersal of the nation. When the school teacher queried him about this answer, he responded: The first *sila,* about one God, was violated by Sukarno who attempted to bring communism into the state through NASAKOM.[5] The second *sila,* about humanitarian practice was violated by Suharto, whose corruption and heavy-handed ways were very inhumane. The third *sila,* the unitary state, was violated by Habibie, who opened the door for East Timor to leave the nation. The fourth *sila,* about representation and consensus, was violated by the congress, who got rid of Gus Dur precisely through back-handed manoeuvrings and under the table discussions that did not represent the will of the people. The fifth *sila,* about social justice, was being violated by Megawati, under whose rule justice was bought and sold, with proven criminals walking free while poor individuals who simply cut a branch off a tree, dug up a tapioca root, or caught a fish, could be put in jail. With all the *silas* violated, where is the nation? It is better to give up and disperse.

The chapters in this volume, although presenting mixed views, tend to share in large part this pessimism after three years of decentralization, a process that many at first thought would be an instant answer to the woes created by the earlier highly centralistic system of the New Order era. However, time will tell, and it is perhaps unrealistic to expect that so many institutions and ideologies that had been created and nurtured over many decades could be swept away overnight. A new optimism seems to be emerging as we put this book to press, since at the moment Indonesia has already begun a new election process, which will take many months to complete before a new president, a new legislature, and

eventually new local politicians are in place. The new procedures that have been introduced to decide these new positions, with the launching of direct elections, have brought a new feeling of hope to many, that democracy and a true local 'autonomy' will be able to thrive in the years to come.

Notes

1 The expression 'regional autonomy' is translated from the Indonesian *otonomi daerah*. *Otonomi daerah* is also sometimes translated as 'local autonomy'. These expressions, and the term 'regionalism' as it is used in this book, are meant to be synonymous with 'decentralization'.
2 See, for example, Warren (1988) for a clearly articulated expression of how several areas in Bali were affected by law no. 5/1979, which created a standard system of village governance and 'bureaucratized' local governments.
3 The original reads: *Potret pengerukan sumber daya alam Indonesia lewat hukum rimba gaya baru*.
4 Two recent incidents come to mind. The people of Larantuka rose up in anger and burned the court house in Larantuka in November 2003 because of the arrest and conviction of a priest. He had made well-founded accusations that the *bupati* of Larantuka had extorted emergency relief funds aimed at helping victims of the floods in Flores in early 2003. The *bupati* accused him of defamation of character and the judge convicted him. The most recent incident was on March 10, 2004, when several truckloads of Manggaraian farmers (West Flores) attacked the police station in Ruteng. They were incensed at the arrest of four women who had been merely digging tapioca roots on land which had been their fields until the regency government had forcefully evicted them in October 2003, stating that it was forest land. Four of the farmers were shot dead on the spot. Repercussions from these events continue to unfold.
5 NASAKOM is an acronym for *nasionalisme* (nationalism), *agama* (religion) and *komunisme* (communism), a compromise attempted by Sukarno to bring all these three ideologies into his political dogma. His flirtation with communism was what led to a Western (particularly US) dislike of Sukarno and the eventual prosecution of communists in the beginning of the New Order.

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Part I

The politics of regional autonomy

2
Exercising freedom
Local autonomy and democracy in Indonesia, 1999–2001

Pratikno

Introduction

After applying a centralized system of government for almost its entire political history, the Indonesian government finally had to end it all. Following the emergence of popular movements demanding democratization and decentralization in 1997–9, the central government responded by stipulating law no. 22/1999 on local autonomy. The law limits the authority of the central government drastically and devolves the rest down to the district governments. Regional political recruitment, which used to be tightly controlled by Jakarta, has since become locally controlled. The political position of the regional parliaments has increased, and they now control the regional executive branch. In 1999 parliament members were elected by the first free and fair election since 1956.

What the people expect from these radical changes is an Indonesia with better government, better public services, more prosperity, more justice and more equality. These are logical expectations, since the centralized system during the Suharto era (1965–98) had produced the reverse. However, the implementation of a more decentralized and democratized government has been much more difficult and complicated than Indonesian people imagined.

Scepticism about the reforming capacities of the regional autonomy laws grew over the first two years of their implementation. As soon as law no. 22/1999 on regional government came into effect (in January 2001), the national Ministry of Home Affairs established a committee to revise the law. In February 2002, the committee produced a draft of the revision, which then became an object of public debate in Indonesia.

In the meantime, the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN) argued that the practice of local autonomy since 1999 has been endangering economic development in Indonesia, both at the local as well as at the national level. Thousands of district and municipal government regulations were identified as constraining inter-regional trade, creating a high-cost economy and, consequently, discouraging investment.[1] Although finally ‘only’ 38 local

regulations were cancelled by the national government, this finding has dampened the optimistic view that Indonesians had held of decentralization as the best policy option.

This chapter will attempt some explanation of the practices of regional autonomy in Indonesia. It is very important to understand the reasons for the initiation of a decentralization policy in 1999, which provided more space for local autonomy. This policy is an integral part of the move toward democratization, which was initiated after the fall of President Suharto and began with the 1999 election, which was highly competitive, as well as comparatively free and fair. This chapter discusses the implementation of autonomy and democracy at the local level by mapping out the problems that have emerged and then trying to understand the reasons behind them. It will be argued that a decentralization policy was adopted by the central government reluctantly, following the veto of a popular regional movement. Although the law on decentralization has been stipulated already, the practice of decentralization is still under negotiation. The bad practices of local autonomy have strengthened the case of the parties that question decentralization. Unless supported by central power and followed by a decentralization of political parties, the future of decentralization and local autonomy remains uncertain.

Decentralization: a veto of *reformasi*

Many argue that a decentralized government is the most proper political arrangement for Indonesia due to its size and heterogeneity.[2] In terms of geography and demography, Indonesia is large. It consists of a surface area of over 4.8 million square kilometres of which 1.9 million square kilometres are land, broken into over 17,000 islands—13,667 of which are inhabited—that stretch some 5,110 kilometres from east to west and some 1,880 kilometres from north to south. Not surprisingly, there are marked ecological differences between the different areas. In terms of population, Indonesia is large, but more importantly, it is very unevenly distributed. Of a total population of more than 230 million, 60 per cent are living on the small island of Java, which represents, however, only 7 per cent of the country's land area.

Socially, Indonesia is also a country with marked contrasts.[3] Although the Javanese have been the dominant socio-cultural group, there are in reality 300 or more other ethnic groups scattered throughout the country, each strongly influenced by their own traditions that dominate their local areas. Religion is another source of diversity. Although predominantly Muslim, Indonesia recognizes no fewer than four other official religions—Protestant Christianity (with multiple denominations), Catholicism, Buddhism and Hinduism—which all play a recognized and often influential role in Indonesian society. Given the size and heterogeneity of the country, it is very difficult for the central government to understand and govern effectively from the centre. Therefore, it

seems logical that some functions of government should be devolved to the local people through the setting up of representative local governments.

However, if we look at Indonesian political history, this has not always been the prevailing view. There is an opposing argument that the size and the heterogeneity of the country could lead to fragmentation and the accentuation of disparities, which might constrain policies of political decentralization. Geographically, the archipelagic nature of the country creates difficulties in communication between areas of the country, highlighting their isolation and differences. Socially, given different traditions, religions and cultures, regionalism potentially might have a greater influence than nationalism.[4]

Given this tension between these two arguments, it is not surprising that Indonesia has witnessed a changing pattern of relationships between central and local governments throughout its history. As early as the country gaining independence from the Dutch in 1945, the newly established government, led by the first president Sukarno, experimented with decentralization. Laws on local government stipulated in 1948, 1949 and 1957 promoted decentralization and local democracy.[5] However, in 1959, a presidential decree moved to a centralized system of government that was applied throughout the remaining years of Sukarno's government (1959–68).

The subsequent government, referred to as the New Order (1965–98) took a similar policy option. Inheriting an economic crisis from the Sukarno era, the Suharto government in its early years could safely place economics above political development, and as a consequence emphasized political stability rather than political freedom.[6] More importantly, it rationalized the use of an authoritarian government to carry out these economic tasks.

The case for an authoritarian government during the New Order was backed up by that government's interpretation of national history during the 1950s and 1960s. The New Order view emphasized the fragility of multi-party alliances in the 1950s, the regional rebellions of the 1950s and early 1960s, as well as the hyperinflation of that time. An important basis of New Order authority was the rescuing of the nation from an 'attempted coup' in 1965 by the Indonesian Communist Party, which subsequently legitimized the role of the army who had 'saved the nation' from numerous 'evils' and defended the national ideology of *Pancasila*.[7] New Order paternalists also argued that liberal democracy was not suitable for the Indonesian cultural context. Political order and social harmony were the most important values in regulating social and political relations, and the state was taken for granted as the highest authority that would protect the interests of all.[8] The result was a strong intervention of the executive branch at the national level in the activities of other governmental bodies at both national and local levels.

The governmental structure that was institutionalized during the New Order consists of four levels of 'local' government below the national level: first, the province or the first level of local government *(daerah tingkat I);* second, the district (*kabupaten,* for rural and semi-urban areas) or the municipality

(*kotamadya,* for urban areas) which are also called the second level of local government *(daerah tingkat II);* third, the sub-district government *(kecamatan);* and lastly the village government (*desa* for rural area and *kelurahan* for urban areas). This chapter will concentrate on the district level, since this is the level to which the greatest amount of authority has been passed under the regional autonomy laws of 1999.

During the years of the New Order (1965–98), the district governments had the responsibility to secure and implement national and provincial policies; however, they did have authority in some affairs *(urusan rumah tangga daerah)*. Space for decision making at the district level included authority to make policies concerning the decentralizing of its affairs, and implementing policies of the central and provincial levels of government. However, all were subject to the supervision of the higher level of government.[9] The Ministry of Home Affairs, in particular, had considerable supervisory control in ensuring that national policies of a wide range were implemented at all levels of government. To ensure that any local development planning would fit with national development planning, most district government regulations were subject to approval by the provincial government and even, sometimes, by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The position of *bupati,* or district head, was also a part of the central government's means of controlling the local government. First, the district head was made dependent on the central government. This started with the appointment process. Although formally the local assembly proposed the candidates, in practice the central government normally controlled the appointment process. Second, the district head was not responsible to the local assembly but to the president through the Minister of Home Affairs. The district head was only obliged to render a statement to the local assembly concerning his 'responsibility to the central government'. Although constitutionally empowered to initiate and review legislation, the local assembly, like its central counterpart, had been rendered relatively impotent.

The abundant financial resources controlled by the central government expanded its potential to provide patronage to bureaucrats at the local level. Gaining more development projects for their region was fruitful for local bureaucrats, since the more numerous and bigger the development projects they were involved in, the more income they could earn. Corruption was sometimes permitted and crackdowns sometimes depended on the perceptions of the central government officials (Liddle 1985:78). These opportunities for patronage helped to ensure local bureaucratic loyalty to the centre.

A more significant means of control was a political environment in which local government officials should have 'sole-loyalty' to the central government. Civil servants, including local government officials, were organized under the civil service corps (Korpri). All local government officials automatically become Korpri members, and were obliged to support Golkar, the government party. This political arrangement further strengthened the centralization that had been integrated into the formal structure of government.

During the *reformasi* of 1997–9, political movements challenged these political arrangements. Popular movements demanded democratization, while regional movements asked for more autonomy.[10] Some regions, such as Aceh, Riau, East Kalimantan, West Papua and East Timor, struggled to gain independence. Unlike Suharto, who dealt with such political movements by military repression, the post-Suharto government had no other option than to open up opportunity for reform. Then President Habibie, Suharto's former vice president, took over the formal political position of Suharto without controlling all the political privileges that Suharto had had. He found it difficult to maintain Suharto's approach. There was almost no other option for Habibie than to introduce some important policies that guaranteed autonomy and parliamentary democracy at the regional level.

Indeed, the 1999 decentralization policy was the result of public political pressures that the central government was unable to refuse or escape. The problem of the political legitimacy of the Habibie government, the political environment that limited the use of military coercion and the economic and financial crisis of the central government all undermined the political authority of the central government. The inability to maintain a highly centralized government meant the central government had to adopt a decentralized system of government—as stipulated in law no. 22/1999. Therefore, the sustainability of the decentralization policy, I argue, is not a fait accompli, but rather will be a product of political bargaining between local and national political powers in the years to come.

Local autonomy

Regardless of the reasons behind the decentralization policy, law no. 22/1999 has introduced quite a significant change in national political arrangements by decentralizing considerable authority to the local governments. According to this law, the authority of the national government is limited to five public arenas: international affairs, defence, monetary policy, religion and the judiciary. This policy is then secured by the central government regulation no. 25 of 2000, which lists in detail all kinds of activities and authorities that belong to the central and provincial governments. Other activities and authorities that are not on the list fall into the hands of the district and municipal governments.

The new decentralization policy provides more autonomy at the district and municipal levels than at the provincial level. The provincial government, according to the law, is given authority to deal mostly with matters that cross district or municipal boundaries. It is also mentioned that the district and municipal governments are not subordinate to the provincial government. The position of the provincial government as the central government representative through deconcentrated power is also limited. Therefore, field administration agencies *(dinas)* or central government offices at the provincial level *(departemen)* are now limited to the five areas that the central government still

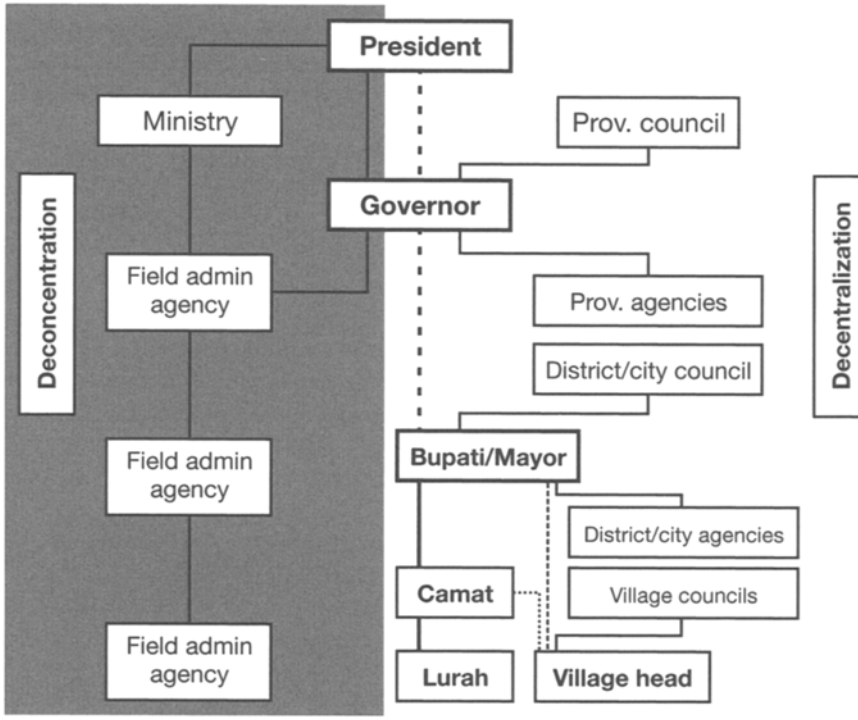

Figure 2.1 Structure of Indonesian government (law no. 22/1999).

controls, while field administration agencies for other matters at the district and municipality level have been dissolved.

This new arrangement of central and local relations has strengthened the political position of the district and municipal governments. Besides having greater authority devolved to them, the formal position of the district and municipal governments is stronger due to the abolition of their position as deconcentrated agencies. This can be seen in Fig. 2.1.[11]

As the district and municipal government no longer see themselves as the subordinates of the provincial government, the provincial government often has difficulties in communicating and coordinating with them. To give an example, the governor of Central Java province complained that more than 50 per cent of the heads of districts or municipalities were unwilling to attend the meetings organized by the governor. This has happened in many provinces in Indonesia.

There has also been decentralization, to a certain extent, in terms of financial resources, as set out in law no. 25/1999 on central-local financial relations. While in the past there were no provisions in the law to allocate block grants, this law now stipulates that 25 per cent of national revenue should be distributed as block grants to the local governments. Of the total, 10 per cent is allocated to

all the provinces and the remaining 90 per cent is given to all the districts and municipalities.

Another important change is the introduction of sharing between central and local governments of revenues generated from natural resources such as oil, mining, forestry and fishery. While in the past only property tax was shared between the national government and local governments, now a district producing oil receives 6 per cent of the total revenue generated from this source, while the provincial government also receives 6 per cent of it. The provincial, district and municipal governments also receive other sharing revenues, as can be seen in Table 2.1.

The implication of this policy is clear, the regions that are rich in natural resources, such as East Kalimantan, Riau, West Papua and Aceh, increased their total budget significantly in 2001. The hope was that this policy would reduce political tensions between Jakarta and these regions and that regional movements

Table 2.1 Revenue sharing according to law no. 25/1999

	Distribution policy								
		Regional/local government (%)							
Sharing revenue category	*Central government*	*The prov'g overnment*	*The district / municipal government*	*Other district / municipal government in the province*	*Other provinces*	*Other district / municipalities*	*Collection cost*	*Intensifying cost*	*Total*
Property tax	10	16.2	64.8			6.5	9	3.5	90
Property transaction fee	10	16	64			20			90
Forestry									80
• IHPH	20	16	64						
• PSDH	20	16	32	32					
General mining									80
• IT	20	16	64						
• IEIE	20	16	32	32					

	Distribution policy								
	Regional/local government (%)								
Sharing revenue category	*Central government*	*The prov'g overnment*	*The district / municipal government*	*Other district / municipal government in the province*	*Other provinces*	*Other district / municipalities*	*Collection cost*	*Intensifying cost*	*Total*
Fishery						80			80
• PPP	20								
• PHP	20								
Oil mining	85	3	6	6					15
Gas mining	70	6	12	12					30

in Riau and Kalimantan would decline. However, the cases of West Papua and Aceh provinces, in particular, were much more complex than just fiscal problems. The two regions were still dissatisfied and have demanded independence. In 2000, the central government decided to give Special Autonomy to Aceh and West Papua. By this special treatment, the two provinces were promised a higher degree of autonomy and a larger financial allocation.

Local democracy

If autonomy is defined as a political space that is available at the local level, the next question is how local people fill this space. By looking at political arrangements that support the development of local democracy, this section will try to identify the opportunities local people have to gain control of local authority.

Law no. 22/1999 initiates autonomy and promotes democratization, firstly by strengthening the position of the local parliament at the district and municipal levels. Constitutionally, district parliaments have been guaranteed a significant role in government. The new law on local government, law no. 22/1999, clearly states that the district parliament is the only body responsible for political decision making within its given territory. The parliament has the highest position in the new structure of local government concerning the execution of local autonomy. The parliament has the power to elect, supervise, monitor and even fire the district head. According to the new law, the head of a district is elected

by the parliament without the necessity of approval from the central government. It is significantly different compared to the previous law, law no. 5/1974, which limited the role of the district parliament to proposing candidates, while the final appointment was in the hands of the central government.

The new law also stipulates that the district head should be responsible to the district parliament and, therefore, he or she must give a speech of accountability to the plenary session of the local parliament annually, at the end of the budget year. The parliament has the right to impeach a district head *(bupati)* with presidential approval. The new law clearly stipulates that if the accountability speech of a *bupati* is rejected twice, then he or she has to resign. To give some examples, in 2001, the district head of Semarang, Central Java, decided to step down from his office due to political pressure from the local parliament. In 2002, the head of Surabaya municipal government also resigned under pressure from the local parliament. This is unlike the New Order period when the parliaments had no right to take any action against the poor performance of district heads. According to the new law, the parliament can ask for presidential approval to fire the district head if he or she is considered by the parliament to have performed inadequately. Indeed, this law provides a legal base to shift important political tasks from the national to the local level, and at the same time from the bureaucracy to politicians.

Apart from the strong constitutional base provided by the new law, the local parliaments elected in the 1999 general election have a very strong political legitimacy. The 1999 general election at the local level was generally considered to have fulfilled the minimum requirements for a free and fair election.[12] In the first place there was a dramatic change in the government's behaviour toward the general election. This was clearly demonstrated in a number of instances. As the bureaucracy was freed from government intervention, the state became neutral to all parties during this election. There was no longer government intervention in terms of supporting a certain party, namely Golkar, as was the case in the past.

Another important element was the presence of an independent election committee. This committee was no longer controlled by the government as it used to be. The old committee, known as LPU (*Lembaga Pemilihan Umum* or Election Commission) —from the national level down to the most local level, the villages— was fully under government control during the New Order regime. The leadership of the LPU was ex-officio in the hands of the Minister of Home Affairs, one of the most powerful ministers during the Suharto era. At the provincial and district/city levels, leadership of the LPU was automatically guaranteed to the governor and the *bupati*/mayor. All members of LPU were senior bureaucrats at their respective tier of government. The roles of the LPU were not simply to conduct an election but also to ensure that Golkar, as the government's political arm, would stay in power. Therefore, it was not surprising to see that the LPU and its branches were systematically used for the benefit of the government party, Golkar.

Looking at the 1999 election records published by several monitoring committees, we can see that most of the rule violations were concerned with technical issues. The records show that many political parties did not follow campaign schedules that had already been planned, were unable to prevent conflicts among supporters of different parties, and so on. However the general feeling of the population at that time was that they were free to support whichever party they wanted. However, whether the election was able to produce a representative local parliament is another question.

A free and fair election was also possible due to the substantial changes in most Indonesians' attitude toward politics, especially toward elections. People were no longer afraid to form their own political parties. There was also a growing enthusiasm among the people to take an active part in the whole process of the election. It was seen as a necessary condition to bring about change and to cope with the multi-faceted crisis that the country faced, and still is facing. The pace of these changes was incredible, partly due to the roles of the international community and various international organizations, the media, the university community, including students, as well as independent social organizations, such as local NGOs.

Contrary to the past six general elections, undertaken during the 32 years of Suharto's rule, the 1999 general election provided real alternatives for local people. After almost 50 years, since the first general election in 1955, Indonesians had the chance to experience a high level of political competitiveness during an election period. This alone provided a great opportunity for local people to have many alternative parties during the election. The number of parties involved in the 1999 general election in most localities in Indonesia approached the maximum, that is 48 parties. In the election results, the distribution of votes between parties also confirmed that the level of political competitiveness, especially amongst the five big parties, was quite high.

There is no guarantee, however, that this shift in power will have positive implications for the local people, unless the councillors strongly represent the people. As far as the nomination process is concerned, the role of the political parties was very dominant, as indicated in my case study in the single district of Bantul in Yogyakarta Province.[13] Because the 1999 elections used a proportional voting system, people came to the ballot box to vote for one of several parties listed on the voting sheet. It means that the party had the right to list the names of its candidates. This meant that people did not vote for individual candidates, only for the party, and the party would later determine who their representatives would be. The parties followed a bottom-up nomination process starting from the village branch, usually sending the name of one candidate to the sub-district branch. Based on the names proposed by the village branches, the sub-district branch office listed the names of the candidates in rank. In the case of Bantul, the district offices of all the big parties received approximately 70, and as many as 90, names of candidates proposed by the sub-district. In fact, there could

only be a maximum 40 names listed for each party, which is the total number of seats competed for.

There was no guarantee that the proposals submitted by lower office branches would make a significant contribution to the candidates eventually listed at the district level. It is within the authority of party officials at the district level to shorten the list by taking out some names, and to list the rest in a ranked order. In practice, the officials had very substantial discretion to rank the names of candidates regardless of the rank proposed by the sub-district branches. In the case of Bantul, we found many candidates that were listed at the bottom of the list by a sub-district branch, ending up being at the top of the final list made by the district party office. There were even some candidates who were not proposed by any single party office at the sub-district level, who ended up being listed in the top ranks of candidates for the district council.

This centralized nomination resulted in many surprises. Some elected councillors live in another sub-district other than the one that he or she represents. According to the law, every single candidate listed by each party should be clearly charged to represent a certain sub-district. Each party should propose up to 40 candidates who are equally distributed according to sub-districts. Indeed, no one can be a candidate without any formal declaration from the party in the constituency (sub-district) to which he or she belongs. However, there was no obligation that the candidate should live in the sub-district he or she represents. This provided enough room for party officials at the district level to neglect names proposed from sub-district branch offices by putting up candidates from other districts.

This process of candidate nomination suggests that the role of political parties has been very dominant in deciding who will be listed, without any significant control from the public. Consequently, the councillors are very much controlled by their individual political party, which is, in fact, still centrally organized by the party's head office in Jakarta. National offices of each political party in Jakarta can intervene in decision making of their branch at the regional level, including in regard to political recruitment. By the use of a proportional system of election, the hierarchy from national down to the village level is strengthened. Prior to the 1999 election, there was no room for local people to establish a local political party for contending power at the local level. This phenomenon makes local politicians, who have been elected through the 1999 democratic election, more accountable to their political party office in Jakarta than to the local people.

Indeed, democracy within a political party is a very serious problem constraining the democratization process in Indonesia. Many people believe that political parties acted corruptly during the 1999 election process. The internal political structure of most political parties is organized oligarchically with a strong personal leadership at the top. This kind of structure is applied both at the national and the local level, as well as in the relation between the two. Under

such conditions, it is almost impossible to expect democracy and good governance to be generated by a local parliament.

Questioning local autonomy

Many people have had high expectations that decentralization and local autonomy will contribute to solving both local and national problems. There was hope that this policy would give an answer to the problems of the political dissatisfaction of the outer islands, especially the regions with rich natural resources. At the same time it was also expected to lead to the fulfilment of democratic principles in the country, especially at the local level. However, during the transitional period, especially that which Indonesia experienced between 1999–2001, there have been some problems (Schiller, 1999). In this section I will try to outline public opinion about the problems that ultimately invited some pessimism on decentralization policy and local autonomy.

Soon after the laws were released, many local governments responded by producing several new local regulations. Unfortunately, most of the regulations mainly concerned efforts to generate locally owned revenue, which consequently, according to the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce, discouraged investment. Since November 2000, a variety of new local taxes and charges have been invented in many provinces, districts and municipalities. The most common ones are local taxes or charges directed to those transporting goods into or out of a region. To give some examples, the province of Lampung collects taxes from traders transporting agricultural products from Lampung to other regions. The district of Pasaman obligates traders transporting goods to and from Pasaman territory to have a letter declaring the origin of the goods legalized by the district government. To get the letter the traders have to pay a fee.[14] These kinds of regulations have encouraged public debate, which often attacks the decentralization policy being implemented.

Although corruption and money politics are not a new phenomenon in Indonesia, investigative reports and opinions covered by the mass media show the growing spread of corruption in Indonesia following decentralization and democratization. During the New Order government corruption was conducted by high ranking officials at the national level and in the local executive branches. In the post-New Order government, politicians and political parties at both the national and local levels are also committing corruption. Therefore, while corruption in Jakarta has not been reduced, the spread of corruption to the local level has increased significantly.[15] 'Money politics' is now one of the most popular expressions to use to explain the behaviour of members of parliament at the local level.[16]

The relationship between the executive and legislative branches is also another political issue that is publicly debated. Cases for several districts reveal that political tensions between the *bupati* and district parliament (DPRD) have created political instability that is disturbing the functioning of the district

governments. The implementation of district regulations is delayed, the DPRD then recommends that the district head is sacked, and each faction mobilizes popular support which then results in violence between their supporters. These kinds of incidents have occurred in many districts, such as in Sampang in Madura, Buleleng in Bali, Solo in Central Java, and also the Surabaya municipality of East Java.[17] However, this does not mean that if there is no open political tension between the *bupati* and the DPRD that there are no political problems that should be investigated. If there is no open conflict, it may mean that there is collusion for the sake of corruption. Although there has as yet been no serious study about this, I have come across many opinions such as this in my research.

Another issue undermining decentralization policy is the notion of locality, closely related to the concept of ethnicity or religion, which is seen by political leaders in Jakarta as endangering nationhood. There are more than 70 proposals from local areas asking the central government and national parliament to give them the right to be an independent district, city or even a province. Most of them justify their demand in the name of different ethnic or other 'primordial' categories that they recognize. In this context, the transfer of power from Jakarta also means that there is room for contention over local power and authority between various local political groups based on ethnicity and religion. In addition, local autonomy also provides the space for the revival of local aristocracy. There is an indication that new political arrangements of local politics are also bringing back the old feudal structures into local politics. In some cases, this leads to widespread horizontal conflict within society, such as in North Maluku province.

Political elites in Jakarta, even President Megawati, have often pointed out that local autonomy has led to the emergence of conflict among districts or municipalities, or between districts and municipalities within the province. Conflict between fishermen from different districts, which has emerged in several regions, is often connected to the issue of local autonomy. Also, many governors are disappointed by the absence of district and municipal government heads attending coordination meetings that he or she has organized.

Autonomy without democracy

These elaborations are not intended to show a single picture of local autonomy. It is important to underline that the picture of the practices of local autonomy in its early years is not always bleak. Decentralization and local autonomy have provided more political space for local people at the village level to participate in the government.[18] To give an example, the Indonesia Rapid Decentralization Appraisal report of the Asia Foundation suggests that local autonomy stimulates the increase of public participation in the policy making process, innovation in public service delivery and efficiency.[19] The gloomy portrayal of local autonomy

is intended to explain public debate in Indonesia concerning the appropriateness of local autonomy for public interests.

It seems likely that, from the perspective of Jakarta, the bad practices of local autonomy are caused by the excessive room for autonomy that has been given to local actors. This can clearly be seen from the December 2000 version of the revised draft law on local government prepared by the Ministry of Home Affairs. This draft revision says that 'legally and politically, local autonomy is given by the central government to the local community', which then implies that the central government can taken it back whenever it wants. 'The head of a region [not including the local parliament] formulates local government policy, and therefore is in the highest position in the local government structure'. This stipulation is very similar to the Suharto government's law, which put the head of region as the 'sole authority' in the region. The draft also suggests that a local parliament can be dismissed by the president for several reasons, including: if five times the plenary sessions are unable to achieve a quorum; if local parliaments constrain the implementation of local government; and, if one third of the voters want the local parliament to be dismissed. These are just some examples of provisions proposed by the Ministry of Home Affairs regarding the revision of law no. 22/1999 on local government.[20]

It seems likely that the central government sees itself as not having enough authority to monitor, supervise and control the behaviour of local governments. However, if we look at what law no. 22/1999 has in fact specified, the central government indeed does have significant authority to do so. For example, the central government has the right to postpone and even reject regulations legislated by the local government. Even so, the central government did not use this authority when some local government regulations were identified as flouting national interests. It seems to be the case that the central government needs more than one year to decide whether and which local regulations should be revised. During that time the growing public distrust of local autonomy is unavoidable.

In my opinion local autonomy is just an arena in which local actors can play; it is a space that can be filled in by whatever the local actors want. Therefore, the failure or the success of local autonomy is dependent upon the performance of the stakeholders at the local level. Procedurally, democracy and good government at the local level will contribute significantly to the success and legitimacy of local autonomy. Substantively, the availability of human capital that is able to produce qualified and strategic policies for the interests of the public is another important resource for successful local autonomy. It seems likely that it is the most neglected issue in the first years of local autonomy.

In this regard, it will not be possible for decentralization and local autonomy to gain benefits for the public good unless there is also democratization at the local level. Therefore, the main issue is not the inappropriateness of decentralization and local autonomy for Indonesia, but the difficulty in initiating democratization at the local level. As suggested previously, democracy is not

just the voting participation of people in free and fair elections. More substantively, democracy is the courage and ability of the majority of the population to contribute to political recruitment and policy making processes.

Notes

1 See *KPPOD (Komite Pemantauan Pelaksanaan Otonomi Daerah) News,* August 2001 edition up to February 2002 edition.
2 See for instance Ferrazzi (2000). This is also the most common view among the educated middle class in Indonesia.
3 For general information about all districts in Indonesia, see, for instance, CPS & SS Syndicate (2001).
4 This is the main argument used by the Suharto—military government which held power from 1965–98 and created a highly centralized government.
5 The laws are law no. 22/1940 and law no. 1/1957.
6 For a discussion of this issue see, for example, Vatikiotis (1993:32–59).
7 See Bouchier (1994, 1997), for further discussion of how politics in the 1950s has been interpreted. Also see the first eleven articles edited by Bouchier and Legge (1994). Such a portrayal of Indonesia's political history has been widely disseminated throughout Indonesia's population, through schools, books, the cinema and monuments (Bouchier 1994:51–17).
8 See Bouchier (1997); Reeve (1990:157–63).
9 See, for instance, Devas (1989) and Antlov (1995).
10 See for instance, Forrester (1999).
11 This figure is my interpretation of the law.
12 See Pratikno *et al.* (2000).
13 See Pratikno *et al.* (2000).
14 See *KPPOD (Komite Pemantauan Pelaksanaan Otonomi Daerah) News,* August 2001 edition up to February 2002 edition.
15 For the case of natural resource management, see for instance, Awang *et al.* (2001); Haroepoetri (2001).
16 District heads are elected by district parliament members. Many people believe, as has been widely reported by the media, that bribery is the main means by which candidates for district head gain support.
17 See, for instance, Lay (2001).
18 For the case of villages in Java, see for instance Juliantara (2000).
19 See, for instance, the rapid appraisal report on decentralization by The Asia Foundation in 2001– 2002. Also, the *Jawa Pos* daily newspaper has a special space reporting local autonomy practices.
20 The Indonesian Association of District Governments (APKASI) protested against this call to amend the law no. 22 of 1999. See APKASI (2000).

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3
Reorganizing political power in Indonesia
A reconsideration of so-called 'democratic transitions'

Vedi Hadiz[1]

Introduction

The recent Indonesian experience demonstrates the problems of envisioning processes for replacing authoritarian rule with liberal forms of democratic governance—whether through benevolent elite pacts, or simply the rise of civil society and the growth of 'social capital'. As such, it is clearly relevant to the concerns of the still growing literature on democratization and transitions from authoritarian rule, both academic and those spawned by the prolific intellectual production lines of international development and consulting organizations (for example, O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Di Palma 1990; Huntington 1991; Linz and Stepan 1996; McFaul 2002; NDI 2002; USAID 2002).

In analysing the outcomes of the demise of authoritarian rule, it is vital not to rely solely on such factors as elite choices, conjunctural situations, or actors' immediate reactions to events, which have tended to dominate much of the literature on 'democratic transitions' since O'Donnell and Schmitter's seminal work.[2] This is the case even, as Munck observes, now the literature has expanded to cover places as diverse as Southern Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America and East and Southeast Asia (Munck 2001). For example, an influential work by Linz and Stepan highlights the choices in relation to liberalization made by Eastern European communist rulers in the context of perceptions of possible reactions from the Soviet Union (Linz and Stepan 1996:235–45). By the same token, it is also not enough to dwell on the niceties of technical assistance/training programmes to 'build' a civil society led by rational, enlightened individuals, as is often emphasized by international development agencies. It is also inadequate to dwell on the crafting of democratic rules of the game (electoral systems etc.) —as McFaul observes 'if powerful democrats draft the rules, it does not matter what electoral system is adopted or whether a parliamentary or presidential system is adopted' (McFaul 2002:225). Instead, it is far more crucial to highlight the constellations of social forces and interests that determine the parameters of possible outcomes in any given situation, for it is contended here that the direction of political change following the end of authoritarian rule is primarily

the product of contests between these competing social forces (Bellin 2000:175–77).

Specifically, it is argued that the Indonesian experience shows that the forging of new political institutions and arrangements, nationally and locally, in the wake of a long period of authoritarian rule under the so-called New Order of Suharto (1966–98) has been contingent on the nature of salient social forces and interests. Moreover, the experience demonstrates that the legacy of authoritarian rule remains important even as the institutional structures of authoritarian regimes unravel. It is not necessary to adopt the heavily path-dependent approach of Kitschelt *et al.* (1999) —who argue that the legacy of pre-communist rule in different East European countries accounts for their differing post-communist democratization trajectories—to make this observation. It is sufficient to recognize that in spite of a new framework characterized by elections, parties and parliaments, reformist interests may continue to be marginalized, and the rise of a new, liberal democratic, social order may be stalled, even as the old, authoritarian one becomes unviable. To paraphrase an observation once made by Lenin—what is necessary is not only the refusal of new forces to live in the old way, but also the *inability* of dominant ones to continue doing so (Lenin, quoted in Skocpol 1979: 47).

This theoretical viewpoint essentially contradicts the proposition advanced (most famously) by O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) that democratic reform is best served through a pact made possible by more or less equally positioned *ancien regime* and reformist forces. Following from O'Donnell and Schmitter, transition theorists have often assumed that liberal democratic governance is the benevolent result of a situation in which conservative hardliners and reformers have respectively failed to gain the upper hand and, therefore, are inclined toward striking a bargain with each other rather than engaging in conflict. In other words, democracy is supposed to be the product of a 'stalemate' situation. In an internal critique of the literature, however, McFaul suggests that the experience of post-communist Eastern Europe/Central Asia has shown quite the opposite: democracy has required the clear political defeat of the forces of the *ancien régime* by pro-democratic reformist interests; new dictatorships have resulted from the alternative situation (McFaul 2002).

Without suggesting that a return to dictatorship or centralized authoritarian rule is a likely prospect in Indonesia, an observation can essentially be made in relation to the persistence of predatory forms of power. The problem, however, is that the Indonesian case has tended to be examined, explicitly or implicitly, through the lens of 'transitions' arguments which, besides being extremely voluntarist, are also heavily weighted toward negotiation and compromise in the O'Donnell and Schmitter mould (see, for example, van Klinken 1999; Kingsbury and Budiman 2001). Such analyses have been at least indirectly predisposed toward concerns about the threat of social disturbance. Notably, such concerns are mirrored in the statements of major Indonesian political figures, some of

whom have warned against the reform movement descending into the anarchy of social revolution.[3]

By contrast, it is argued here that the institutions of Indonesia's new democracy have been captured by predatory interests precisely because these were not swept away by the tide of reform. In fact, old forces have been able to reinvent themselves through new alliances and vehicles, much like they have, for example, in parts of post-communist Eastern Europe/Central Asia. At the same time reformist interests—whether liberal, social democratic, or more radical—have generally been marginalized from the process of political contestation in Indonesia. Why has this been the case? Again, this is primarily a legacy of Suharto's New Order, which was ruthlessly effective in the disorganization of civil society and in repressing independent societal organization. Those social forces that were not directly nurtured by the New Order and which therefore might have an interest in challenging the system of predatory capitalism—for example sections of the liberal intelligentsia and professional groups in society, the politically marginalized working class—have not been able to overcome this legacy and organize coherently. The result is the ascendance of many of the elements of the *ancien régime*— who were always more organized, coherent and endowed with material resources in the first place—and a non-liberal form of democracy, run by the logic of money politics and political thuggery. It is a form of democracy akin in many ways to those that exist in Thailand and the Philippines in Southeast Asia, and post-Soviet Russia, where similar dynamics can be observed to varying degrees.

But the problem is not at all about the absence of a civil society cemented by enough social capital. Civil society does exist in Indonesia—the issue is that its most salient elements are those that were organized and nurtured under a rabidly predatory system of power. While the interests of civil society are often tacitly understood in the neo-liberal tradition to favour free markets, rule of law and democracy—and thus are associated with idealized notions of a vibrant and independent middle class or bourgeoisie—the reality is that there are often competing interests within civil society itself. Moreover, important sections of civil society, including parts of the bourgeoisie or middle class, may be profoundly anti-democratic or anti-market (Rodan 1996:4–5). It is important to emphasize, however, that the situation is not simply that of powerful 'bad guys' versus weak 'good guys'. The essential issue is that of contending interests: as noted earlier, the New Order legacy has ensured that civil society is *not* characterized by the preponderance of political vehicles which would embody organized interests that fundamentally challenge the persistence of predatory power, for example, by promoting coherent rule of law or social justice agendas. Indeed, the contest over power in post-New Order Indonesia has been characterized by the latter's conspicuous absence—a fact that has great ramifications for the parameters of democratization outcomes.

After the crisis

The system of power that Suharto presided over for three decades quickly became untenable at the end of his long rule in May 1998. With a deepening economic crisis and the looming threat of mass unrest, the reorganization of the system of power became urgent, both to pre-empt demands for 'total reform'—at that time advocated most vocally by militant sections of the student movement—and to provide the opportunity for interests nurtured under the New Order to survive and reorganize.

A most unlikely reformer was to emerge from this situation: Suharto's immediate successor and long time aide, B.J.Habibie. His task was not an easy one because, on the one hand, Habibie had to demonstrate an ability to protect the interests nurtured under the New Order in order to guarantee his own political survival. On the other hand, this was not possible without opening up the political arena to new actors and forces—in other words without democratizing.

The way out was to devise a process of gradual democratic reforms, the outcomes of which Habibie could attempt to control. However, lacking the authority over the institutions of state power that Suharto had enjoyed—including the military and the former state party, Golkar—he was ultimately unable to ensure his election to the Presidency in October 1999. He was instead to be outmanoeuvred and succeeded by Abdurrahman Wahid, the leader of the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), who was at times an apparent ally of Suharto and, at other times, a vocal critic. Less than two years later, Wahid himself was to make way for Megawati Sukarnoputri (daughter of Indonesia's first President Sukarno) whose vehicle—the Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle (PDI-P)—hosts a range of former New Order stalwarts.

But more important than the individuals who came to occupy the presidential office after Suharto was forced to vacate it was the fundamental outcome of gradualist reform. This was the repositioning of a variety of interests, incubated and entrenched during Suharto's long rule, within a new democratic political framework. Specifically, it was crucial for Indonesia's later trajectory that those forces advocating 'total reform'—small sections of the student and labour movements as well as parts of the liberal intelligentsia—were too incoherently organized to sweep aside these old interests in the tumultuous first months of the post-Suharto era.

Thus, the cast of characters in the contest over power now represent this fascinating range of interests: politico-bureaucratic elements who were well entrenched nationally and locally during the Suharto era; ambitious political entrepreneurs and fixers; shadowy gangsters and thugs on the rise; and established as well as aspiring capitalists. Some of these were at the heart of the system of patronage that was the New Order—while others may have been only in its lower layers, but have now come to develop new ambitions. Significantly,

this process involved the forging of new alliances that found ideological expression in appeals to both nationalist and Islamic populist sentiment and imagery. It also involved the emergence of an array of un-civil society groups like paramilitaries, some of which are directly or indirectly linked to political parties inhabited by old elites and their new allies.

Another consequence of this process of reconstitution is that the contest over state power—and for control over its institutions and resources—is not confined to those engaged in the national political arena. This process has instead extended to the local level because of the erosion of central state authority. In spite of such changes, the major theme of the Indonesian political economy remains the appropriation of state institutions and resources by coalitions of politico-bureaucratic and business interests. The unravelling of the New Order only means that these coalitions are now more diverse, diffuse and decentralized, as are the new networks of patronage being built.

It is also important to note that the salient forces involved in the process, nationally as well as locally, are largely confined to those cultivated in the New Order, and exclude others such as labour which had been systematically marginalized within its authoritarian framework (Hadiz 2000). As mentioned above, social forces and interests that might be expected to advocate more thorough reform continue to lack organization. Aware of their own weakness within the wider constellation of forces, market-oriented liberals, for example, have sometimes explicitly welcomed the active role of international organizations such as the IMF as virtual domestic actors in the context of Indonesia's struggle to emerge from the 1997–98 economic crisis. As one suggested, the disciplinary pressure exerted by such organizations—in such areas as budget and finance—can only be applauded 'since domestic forces may not be adequate to clean up the mess'.[4] The labour movement, on the other hand, while benefiting from new freedoms, has most clearly been unable to overcome the legacy of systematic and often brutal disorganization under the New Order.

One of the most important developments in post-Suharto Indonesia is that the contest over state power is no longer confined to coalitions of interests operating in the capital, Jakarta. This reflects a diffusion of politics that would not have been possible under Suharto's highly centralized system of rule. Developing their own systems of patronage and forging their own alliances, powerful local interests have competed openly for control of local government machineries and institutions. Nothing illustrates this better than the fact that the offices of mayors and *bupati* (regents) have become far more highly contested political prizes than ever before, as have positions in local legislatures. Significantly, the election processes for local officials in many provinces have frequently been tainted by accusations of money politics (*Kompas* 22 March 2000; *Kompas* 17 April 2000; *Tempo Interaktif* 29 February 2000) and political thuggery, as local elites with strong links to the New Order scramble to reposition favourably in the new, more fluid, environment. Interestingly, one preliminary survey concluded that local

political elites now consist largely of entrepreneurs who 'matured' under the New Order (IPCOS 2000).

The diffusion of politics to the local level has gone hand in hand with the formal process of decentralizing administrative and fiscal governance to the country's 300-plus *kabupaten* (regencies) and municipal entities. Although the two sets of legislation on regional autonomy introduced in 1999—and implemented in January 2001—remain controversial and are subject to revision (Bell 2001), it is clear that they provide opportunities for local elites to exert direct control over many local resources.

The developments described above would suggest that useful insights might be gained by comparing the Indonesian experience with that of Thailand and the Philippines. In both countries, for example, local bossism—linking dominant political and economic interests—has long been a feature of contests over power and economic resources (see Ockey 1998, Sidel 1999, McVey 2000). Also, in both countries, these contests have involved the widespread practice of money politics and the frequent utilization of brute force, coercion and criminal elements by the rich and powerful—the use of 'goons and gold'. In the Philippines, where entrenched oligarchic families have long captured the national and local machineries of state power, paramilitaries have been a salient feature of political life and of struggle. Both cases, like that of Indonesia, demonstrate how the institutions of democratic politics may be appropriated in the interests of those whose economic and political agenda may be quite decidedly anti-liberal as well as anti-democratic (see Hewison 1993; Anderson 1998a).

The new constellation

The fall of Suharto marked the end of a long chapter in Indonesia's political history, and the beginning of a new one. As the system of authoritarian rule which he presided over faltered, electoral politics has become far more important, as have institutions such as political parties and national and regional parliaments (respectively the DPR and DPRD)[5] as arenas of genuine political competition.

But after 30 years of systematic disorganization of civil society under the New Order—which imposed a highly state-centred authoritarian corporatist framework to prohibit independent sources of political power—not all kinds of interests have been well placed to take advantage of democratization. It is suggested here that democratization has mostly benefited those who occupied the middle and lower rungs of the New Order's vast system of patronage—including its local apparatchik and operators, and its henchmen and enforcers. Thus, small- and medium-scale businessmen who had always relied on political connections and state contracts are now developing more lofty ambitions: some, for example, seek business opportunities by winning political office. The hope, apparently, is

to have direct influence over the allocation of resources, contracts and other forms of largesse.

Similarly, some middle-level civil servants are no longer content with mere administrative power and seek to wield direct political power by contesting local elections. Moreover, gangsters who assisted the New Order's feared security apparatus in the task of intimidating opponents and maintaining order have sought new, more powerful positions in the local political arena, as well as new social status and prestige. A range of these now inhabit political parties or their paramilitary wings, as well as local assemblies or executive bodies. Other players in the local political arena include professional politicians with links to the old New Order parties, or activists who had latched on to the mass and youth organizations from which the New Order regularly recruited new apparatchik and political operators. While there are also relative newcomers, these have grown in prominence only due to alliances with more established figures or groups endowed with political or economic resources—or an apparatus of violence. While some may aspire to use the local political arena as a springboard to national politics, others may increasingly find that much could be harvested from the possession of power and authority at the local level—especially with the erosion of central state authority.

A window into the dynamics of reorganizing power is provided by the alliances that have been cemented in the form of political parties, locally and nationally. It is not surprising that virtually all the parties have been obscure about their respective reform agendas, although they all—including Golkar (the former New Order state party)—present themselves as reformist. Few have clear policies, for example, with regard to market and legal reforms, labour relations, environmental degradation, or the eradication of endemic corruption. Indeed, in the cases in which reformers have emerged, they have subsequently been swept aside in the process of internal party struggles.

It is clearly simplistic to draw the reformist/anti-reformist divide in terms of competition between Golkar and other major parties. In fact, the latter have also been populated by a variety of elements that were all part of the vast network of political patronage that was the New Order. For such interests, parties and parliaments are now the main avenue toward political power and control over state institutions, a situation that contrasts starkly to that which existed in the Suharto era, during which political parties other than Golkar were mainly ornamental. Now different concentrations of old politico-bureaucratic and business interests have been dispersed within all the major parties, along with, typically, small bands of reformist liberals whose influence arguably depends on continuing external pressure—for example from the IMF—for economic reform. After 30 years of labour disorganization, social democratic or labour-oriented parties have not emerged to any degree of significance.

The internal dynamics of the major new parties have been very instructive in terms of understanding some of the dynamics of Indonesian politics, and here we shall briefly examine the cases of two of the major post-Suharto era parties.

The first is the National Mandate Party (PAN) led by Amien Rais—now the chair of Indonesia's national supra-parliament (the People's Consultative Assembly, or MPR). What is significant about this party is that it has been characterized by a serious rift between its Islamic activist followers and more secular liberal intellectuals who had embraced the party because of its nominal secularism. This rift was best illustrated in the acrimony between chairman Rais and the now estranged, former secretary-general, Faisal Basri, the liberal economist. The problem for the liberals was that PAN's real constituency is the traditionally conservative urban petty bourgeoisie. It is thus centred on the 'modernist' Muslim mass organization, the Muhammadiyah, and guided by the vision of a kind of capitalist populism that advocates an active state role in redressing wealth imbalances in favour of *pribumi* (indigenous) Muslim Indonesians. Significantly, there are new rent-seeking opportunities clearly implied in this position. It is significant also that Rais is in fact closely linked to former Suharto crony and Finance Minister Fuad Bawazier—who is widely believed to be a major PAN financier as well being one of its representatives to the MPR. PAN also relies on the support of some elements of ICMI (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*—Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals), the organization set up by Suharto and run by Habibie to mobilize support from the Muslim middle class in the 1990s (Hefner 2000), and which became a conduit for politically ambitious new apparatchik. Thus PAN is arguably dominated by elements that were part of the New Order's system of rule, albeit on its fringes.

The same can be said about the PDI-P led by President Megawati Sukarnoputri, the victor in Indonesia's 1999 parliamentary elections—the first free poll since 1955. In contrast to PAN, it is arguably, along with Golkar, the major exponent of a more secular nationalist brand of populism, which generally emphasizes centralized bureaucratic rule and national consensus on policy. In spite of its own reformist credentials—it was the party that Suharto so uncharacteristically failed to suppress—the PDI-P leadership today is centred on docile New Order-era politicians, while retired military officers and Golkar refugees, including businessman and New Order crony Arifin Panigoro, have joined since 1998. A number of top party members had already been members of the old Suharto-era parliament while a few were middle-level entrepreneurs—Megawati's own husband, Taufik Kiemas being a good example. Meanwhile, liberal intellectuals like economist Kwik Kian Gie and former banker Laksamana Sukardi have co-existed somewhat uneasily within the party.

At the same time, while the party's populist rhetoric seemed to appeal to workers, there has never been any organized labour representation in the PDI-P leadership, except for a Minister of Manpower who actually also heads the old, compliant, New Order-backed labour federation, the FSPSI (*Federasi Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia*—Federation of All Indonesian Workers' Unions). In fact, the PDI-P's position on labour issues has been ambivalent at best, with pronouncements about the intent to protect 'workers as a special and humane

(sic) factor of production' while developing a 'social security system without the excessiveness occurring in Western Europe' (PDI-P 1999:15) being fairly typical.

More importantly, PDI-P appears increasingly attractive to some business interests seeking new allies and protectors. Some press reports suggest that Indonesian Chinese businesses were counted among the PDI-P's strongest supporters during the election campaign of 1999 (*Far Eastern Economic Review* 6 May 1999:26). Notably, the PDI-P's paramilitary wing, the *satgas* PDI-P, has also taken part in the quelling of labour unrest on behalf of industrialists.[6] Such an observation is given some credence at the local level. As one Yogyakarta parliamentarian from Golkar wryly remarked:[7]

> Businesspeople do not dare help Golkar like they did before. Moreover, our businesspeople…follow [whoever] wins. I can say that today is the era of the PDI-P.

Many liberal reformers have also been swept aside from the PDI-P, as Faisal Basri and his allies were from PAN. The party congress in March 2000, for example, saw the ousting of many of its liberal intellectuals from key positions and the growing stranglehold over the party of the ambitious Taufik Kiemas. Film-maker and journalist, Eros Djarot, a long time confidante of Megawati, was one victim of the Congress (*Tempo Interaktif* 8 March 2000) along with academics Mochtar Buchori and Dimyati Hartono.

The point in all of this is that ostensibly 'reformist' parties like PAN and the PDI-P constitute tactical alliances that predominantly draw on the same pool of predatory interests. They have essentially become a new harbour for old and new predators that have not been swept aside by the tide of the reform movement in 1998. Their function has been to act as a vehicle to assure access to the spoils of state power rather than to produce a concrete agenda of fundamental reform.

Local politics: insights into Indonesia's new democracy

Not surprisingly, local political dynamics after the fall of Suharto have mirrored those at the national level, both in terms of the essential predatory logic, and in the appropriation of the institutions of democracy primarily by old interests nurtured by the New Order. Nevertheless, it may be important that local elites appear to be developing the capacity to carve out relatively autonomous positions vis-à-vis those ensconced in Jakarta. Indeed, the current controversy about how much autonomy should be granted to local governments under still contentious new legislation, and how the principle of local autonomy should be implemented (Bell 2001), is indicative of a tug of war between local and central elite interests that may prove quite inconclusive for some time. The analysis offered here directly contradicts assumptions that decentralization policy will

likely result in democratic good governance (USAID 2002). Instead, it is shown here that the local institutions of democratic governance may fall to alliances that constitute the foundations for an extensive predatory local bossism.

It is in this context that the remainder of this chapter deals with the reorganization of power in post-Suharto Indonesia as reflected at the local level, with Yogyakarta and North Sumatra as case studies. The assumption is that the diffusion of politics since the fall of Suharto means that it is no longer possible to understand the basic logic of Indonesian politics and society via Jakarta dynamics alone, if it ever was. Although it is recognized that there are distinct problems of extrapolating generally from these cases, given the diversity of conditions across Indonesia, it is suggested that the patterns of power relations identified in Yogyakarta and North Sumatra might be found in other areas, even though the social forces will differ from case to case. For example, contrasting the dynamics in provinces that are particularly richly endowed with natural resources and those that are not could also prove an additional useful exercise. North Sumatra, and particularly Yogyakarta, may be counted as regions that are not expected to fare particularly well, financially, under the decentralization programme. Yogyakarta lacks natural resources, while the revenue from North Sumatra's plantations sector would fall largely under the control of the central government without further amendments to existing legislation. Nevertheless local elites in both areas, like elsewhere, have been enthusiastic supporters of a decentralization process that would theoretically allow them greater direct access to a variety of material resources, through greater taxation powers etc.

Radically different dynamics, however, will probably be found in two areas in the vast Indonesian archipelago: Papua (formerly West Irian) and Aceh. There, local elites are seriously involved in secessionist movements, and are not merely repositioning favourably in the context of decentralization policy.

Yogyakarta, a designated Special Region in the heart of Central Java—with a rich history and cultural tradition—has been relatively free of much of the wanton political violence and turbulence that has characterized many other regions. But it has been less free of the thuggery and money politics that have frequently accompanied contests for control over local political offices. North Sumatra, a major site of the historically important plantations sector and, more recently, a major centre of manufacturing industry, has even more clearly displayed the characteristics of a new political environment dominated by the use of money and violence.

As in neighbouring Central Java, the PDI-P emerged victorious in Yogyakarta in the 1999 parliamentary elections. Of the six national parliamentary seats that represent the Special Region of Yogyakarta, two were PDI-P, while the rest were equally divided amongst PAN, PKB (National Awakening Party of former President Abdurrahman Wahid), Golkar, and the PPP (United Development Party), the old 'Muslim' party of the New Order. The PDI-P is also the dominant force in Yogyakarta's provincial parliament, controlling 18 of the 54 seats. Much of the same pattern is replicated in the various sub-provincial parliaments in the

kabupaten (regencies) of Bantul, Kulonprogo, Gunung Kidul, Sleman and in the city of Yogyakarta itself.

In North Sumatra, the PDI-P has also been the dominant force. It won 10 of the 24 national parliamentary seats allocated to the province, as well as 30 of the 85 seats in the provincial parliament, thereby emerging as the strongest faction. It also controls no less than 228 of the 690 seats in the various sub-provincial and city parliaments, leaving Golkar a distant second with just 145 seats.[8]

It is useful to understand political parties in Yogyakarta and North Sumatra, as is the case in Jakarta, as primarily the vehicles of emerging coalitions of interests, older and newer, forged in battles to secure control over state power and its resources. Again, the demarcation lines locally are rarely between clearly reformist and pro-status quo forces, for these will intermingle and re-align within party vehicles. As in other regions, the authority and power of the local legislatures, and therefore of political parties, have been significantly enhanced with the erosion of central state authority.

Significantly, formal decentralization of powers to the regions has in general given rise to questions about the rise of local practices of KKN (the Indonesian acronym for corruption, collusion and nepotism) and the emergence of petty official fiefdoms. Although such concerns have been much stronger in relation to regions with abundant natural resources, Yogyakarta has not been completely immune from them. In North Sumatra, sub-provincial politicians are particularly concerned to ensure local control over revenue from the plantations sector as well as independence in introducing new levies.[9] One provincial level Golkar parliamentarian in Yogyakarta, for example, suggests that:[10]

> Because the culture of the bureaucracy remains the same, the decentralization of power or authority, I am afraid, will be followed by the decentralization of KKN [corrupt] practices.

Others are aware that local parliamentarians are in a particularly good position. As one PPP provincial parliamentarian in Yogya observes:[11]

> With the growing strength of the DPR…deviations that used to occur in the bureaucracy may now happen in the DPRD.

Given the decentralization of powers to the *kabupaten* level envisaged in the new legislation, another PPP parliamentarian in Yogyakarta suggests that 'opportunists' in the future will be especially interested in sub-provincial DPRD II.[12] In North Sumatra, some local legislators admit that the practice of KKN is already a growing problem in local state institutions.[13]

These local legislatures are particularly crucial sites of political battles during elections for *bupati* and for mayor. In Yogyakarta, this has already been witnessed in the election process of the *bupati* of Sleman. The case was particularly controversial, with contending forces reportedly deploying both

money politics and intimidation. Indeed, allegations of beatings, kidnappings, the use of paramilitary organizations and even bomb threats were pervasive.[14] In North Sumatra, the election of the *bupati* of Karo was a particularly ugly affair, which involved the mysterious burning of the local parliament house.[15]

It may be significant as well that the selection process of regional representative to the national MPR in 1999 was also reportedly tainted—legislators in the Yogyakarta DPRD recall being offered large sums of money to elect particular individuals.[16] Another notable case of local money politics involved a debacle for the PDI-P in the city of Medan, North Sumatra. Controversy shook the party badly when its official candidate—long-time bureaucrat Ridwan Batubara—failed to win the mayoralty, in spite of the party's strong position in the city's legislative body. It transpired that PDI-P members in the legislature had been bribed to vote for another candidate (*Kompas* 22 March 2000), local businessman Abdillah, while goons and thugs had been deployed to intimidate them as well.[17] It is interesting that Abdillah achieved victory even though his main rival was the brother of Yopie Batubara, a major local businessman and head of the North Sumatra Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Yopie Batubara himself admits to a failed attempt to sway the votes of Medan legislators through monetary incentives—for which he had kept the receipts.[18]

Thus, what seems to be developing is a situation in which legislative bodies, in particular, are emerging as a site for the auctioning of powerful positions and the distribution of political largesse. Given the enhanced stature of legislative bodies, nationally and locally, these developments are important in making sense of much of what is happening in the post-Suharto period. Recalling Anderson's famous assertion about the significance of political murders in Thailand in the 1980s (Anderson 1998b) in relation to the rise of parliaments, that such effort is now invested to gain control over local offices in Indonesia is clearly indicative of their growing value and significance.

But it has been as much about naked force as it has been about money as political parties form their own paramilitary wings or civilian militia. In Yogyakarta 'Islamic' paramilitary groups have been at least as ubiquitous as the *satgas,* or paramilitary wing of the politically ascendant PDI-P. Groups like *Gerakan Pemuda Ka'bah* (GPK), loosely linked to the PPP have been active, as have the *Front Pembela Islam* (FPI), which allegedly involves co-operation between several Islamic-oriented parties including the nominally secular PAN.[19] Members of party-linked paramilitary organizations or civilian militia frequently function as goons when these parties need to flex their muscles—especially during local elections. It is significant as well that members of paramilitary organizations are sometimes alleged to have underworld links. It has been suggested that they have been involved in new protection rackets, for example, probably in collusion with the corrupt police force.[20]

In North Sumatra, however, protection rackets—as well as illegal gambling and prostitution—still appear to be the domain of old New Order-backed youth/

gangster organizations like the *Pemuda Pancasila,* and the powerful *Ikatan Pemuda Karya*. It is significant that a number of such organizations' members currently occupy local parliamentary seats. It is also significant that activists of these organizations, with historic links to both the military and Golkar, have frequently migrated with ease to other parties, including PAN and the PDI-P.

It is in this context that questions arise about the origins of the individuals that man these burgeoning paramilitaries. Some local party officials admit, for example, that it is likely that some have simply crossed over from the *Pemuda Pancasila*—the nationally-organized 'youth organization' that effectively acted as a state-sponsored organized crime operation under the New Order (see, for example, Ryter 1998).[21] This they do in search of new sources of patronage. Continuing high levels of unemployment, especially in the wake of economic crisis, conceivably provides a steady stream of potential new entrants into the ranks of such organizations.[22]

More crucial, however, for the purposes of broad analysis is to gauge the kinds of interests represented by those who are now in, or seeking control of, the local machineries of power.

In this context, North Sumatran dynamics are particularly enlightening. Of the 22 *bupati* and mayors winning elections since the fall of Suharto, all but one have been Golkar nominees, in spite of the emergence of the PDI-P as the dominant party in the region. Given the role of local legislative bodies in electing these officials, this may indicate the greater adeptness of Golkar at playing the game of money politics and political thuggery. Indeed, elections without accusations of these practices have been rare in North Sumatra. Also, interestingly, at least six of these new *bupati*/mayors have backgrounds as local entrepreneurs, demonstrating the growing attractiveness of direct bureaucratic power to people engaged in business.[23] Most of the remainder have been bureaucrats, indicating a strong degree of continuity with the New Order.

It is in North Sumatra as well that *preman* or gangsters (usually linked to 'youth' organizations) have most clearly emerged as direct players in local politics. Three parliamentarians in the city of Medan—Bangkit Sitepu, Moses Tambunan (both Golkar) and Martius Latuperisa (Justice and Unity Party)—are leading figures of the local branches of such organizations. While critical of the avarice of his fellow politicians, the latter admits to a life of crime, which has included 'everything but rape'.[24] Significantly, New Order-era 'youth' organization figures have won the top executive body positions in the town of Binjai and the *kabupaten* of Langkat.[25]

Clearly the contest over power in Yogyakarta and North Sumatra has been about control over resources. The stakes may be relatively small in natural resource-poor Yogyakarta, at least for the time being. But it would not be so for aspiring political entrepreneurs in resource-rich places like Kutai in Kalimantan. The *bupati* of Bantul, Yogyakarta, speaks of setting up new local state enterprises although he presides over little with great economic value, except for the popular tourist site, Parangtritis beach. But for individuals such as this

bupati, it is clearly better to have direct control over scarce resources rather than no control over resources under the jurisdiction of Jakarta.[26] It is not surprising that some reports suggest that mayors across Indonesia, armed with newfound powers, are now toying with the idea of instituting new levies to business and the public. This is also the case in North Sumatra, where local politicians are introducing such new levies, creating distress in the business community.[27]

Reflecting more general, national dynamics, in both Yogyakarta and North Sumatra, the fall of the New Order has *not* been accompanied by the greater influence of movements and organizations representing the interests of lower classes, which have remained excluded from the process of political contest. Thus, labour organizations, though existing in greater numbers and operating much more openly than during the Suharto era, remain weak, largely ineffective, and still vulnerable to acts of outright repression. Such acts, however, have been increasingly committed against workers by hoodlums or hired militia, rather than state security forces, as was the case in the immediate past.[28]

It is true that labour activists have benefited much from the loosening of rules and regulations regarding the establishment of unions. At the national level, several dozen new unions have registered with the Department of Manpower. It is now theoretically unnecessary for labour activists to operate in semi-clandestine fashion, unlike in the Suharto era during which labour controls were extremely repressive (Hadiz 1997).

Nevertheless, the historical legacy of disorganization and demobilization during Suharto's rule, and of the crushing of militant sections of organized labour at the very genesis of the New Order (due to links to the Indonesian Communist Party), ensures the continuing relative weakness of the labour movement as a whole. Thus in Yogyakarta and North Sumatra, as is true nationally, labour has been largely ignored by contending elites.

Significantly, the continuing salience of the interests that had been embedded in the vast network of patronage that was the New Order is reflected in the ideologies and world 'views that remain prominent among major political actors. In Yogyakarta, for example, the views of many political party elites on the nature of labour struggles sometimes reproduce nearly exactly the kind propagated by officials of the decidedly anti-labour New Order. Thus, some local parliamentarians in Yogyakarta tend to waver between a condescending paternalism toward 'uneducated' workers and moral outrage when the problem of apparently heightened labour unrest is brought up. However, rather than recognizing deep-rooted problems in the area of industrial relations, many such parliamentarians advance the 'third party' explanation so favoured by New Order officials like the notorious former security chief and Minister of Manpower Sudomo. Like Sudomo, they tend to argue that labour unrest has largely been due to the self-interested, behind-the-scenes manipulations and opportunism of NGOs. A favoured target of this kind of moral indignation is the People's Democratic Party (PRD), a small leftist party whose affiliates in Yogyakarta are routinely accused of staging strike actions as well as 'misleading' young

'impressionable' workers.[29] Claims about the omnipresence of the PRD in labour disputes in Yogyakarta clearly reflect a tendency to equate the rise of labour unrest with the resurgence of communism, which as Etty once observed, was a characteristic of New Order officials (Etty 1998). This is hardly surprising, as many of these local parliamentarians have backgrounds in organizations that historically were part of the alliance that brought the New Order to power while simultaneously smashing the old Communist Party.

Indeed, while anti-PRD rhetoric is much less pronounced in North Sumatra, generally anti-communist rhetoric is commonly heard as well. Indeed, members of 'youth' organizations like the military-linked *Pemuda Pancasila,* with direct experience of confrontations with communists in the 1960s, still play a major role in local politics.[30] One Medan municipal parliamentarian from PAN—and member of the women's section of the *Pemuda Pancasila*—suggests that one should always be 'vigilant…because [communists] are shrewd, well-trained'. She adds that 'they do not only acquire this shrewdness from internal organizing', but also through 'foreign contacts'.[31]

But the fixation with communists may disguise other dynamics beginning to emerge, as another aspect of the contest over power in Indonesia has been the selective mass mobilization of the urban poor on behalf of contending elites. Reports abound in the Indonesian press regarding 'rent-a-crowd' demonstrations and rallies. Thus, it is interesting that such powerful figures as the Sultan of Yogyakarta, who is governor of the province, and the *bupati* of Bantul have regarded outbreaks of labour unrest as part of sinister manipulations by political rivals to discredit their administrations.[32] It is clear that they were not referring to the PRD, which is very small, but real or imagined machinations by more significant political actors.

Whether this view of the roots of recent cases of labour unrest in Yogyakarta is valid is still difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless, at least one PPP Yogyakarta parliamentarian, with known links to the *Gerakan Pemuda Ka'bah,* confirmed that certain major political parties might indeed be responsible for some of the labour unrest.[33] One Medan municipal parliamentarian, the local boss of the military-linked 'youth' organization, the innocuously named Communications Forum for the Sons and Daughters of Military Retirees (FKPPI), openly admits to having fermented labour unrest on occasions.[34]

This suggests the tantalizing possibility that party elites may devote more attention in the future to developing bases of labour support in the context of heightened power struggles and strategies of selective mass mobilizations. At the national level, some labour organizations have indeed been established—perhaps with still insignificant bases at the grassroots level—but with clear links to party elites. The most highly publicized has been the Muslim Workers' Union (PPMI), headed by Eggi Sudjana, a long time field operator for Islamic populist forces, with links to the Crescent and Star Party (PBB). This, in turn, further opens a lucrative area of enterprise for politically-connected hoodlums and thugs. But without greater capacities for labour self-organization, elite involvement may

only open the door for manipulation, rather than negotiation and greater access to power for organized labour.

Conclusion

The reorganization of power in contemporary Indonesia recalls some of the experiences of countries like Thailand and the Philippines, and that of post-Soviet Russia. All of these cases demonstrate serious problems with envisaging the replacement of authoritarian regimes with liberal forms of democratic governance. Instead, they show that old interests and such un-civil forces as local bosses and political gangsters may reinvent themselves and appropriate the democratization process, and thereby exercise predatory power through money politics and political thuggery. Their collective experience, along with Indonesia's, makes the triumphalist tone adopted by those who see the inexorable, worldwide march of democracy in the liberal vein, driven by elite enlightenment or rational choice, sound somewhat hollow.

This all suggests a way of reading the recent Indonesian dynamics that contradicts notions of transitions to liberal forms of democracy, which some Indonesia observers seem to have considered 'inevitable' (Budiman 1999:41) once Suharto was toppled. Such a reading suggests that the ultimate establishment of a democratic regime in the liberal vein will not necessarily be the outcome of the unravelling of the New Order. From this point of view, the currently highly volatile, angst-ridden state of Indonesian politics and society is not simply a transitional stage. In fact, Indonesia is no longer in transition in the sense that the new patterns and essential dynamics of the exercise of social, economic and political power have now been more or less established. In other words all the political violence, vote buying, kidnappings and so on today are not symptomatic of 'growing pains' toward an ultimately liberal democratic system, but fundamental instead to the logic of a 'something else'—a non-liberal type of democracy driven by money politics and thuggery—that is already entrenched, and the variations of which can readily be found elsewhere.

Notes

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2 Indeed, consideration of such factors alone could lead to a descent into the most banal forms of rational choice (and game-theoretic mathematical models). McFaul (2002:215) has noticed that the 'postulates' of transition theorists are strikingly 'very similar to institutional arguments being generated by rational choice theorists working in the positivist tradition'.

3 For example, a statement by opposition leader and future President Abdurrahman Wahid, as reported in *Kompas,* 11 February 1999; also a speech by General Wiranto, then Indonesian defence chief, as reported in *Jakarta Post,* 5 November 1998.

4 From Mohammad Sadli, 'The Way Out of Jakarta's Prolonged Messy State', *The Straits Times,* 27 March 2001.

5 DPRD are divided into two categories: DPRD I, which are provincial level local parliaments, and DPRD II, which are sub-provincial (city and regency) level parliaments.

6 Interview with activists of Serikat Buruh Independen Indonesia, Yogyakarta, 15 December 2000.

7 Interview with Khairuddin, head of the Golkar faction in the Yogya regional parliament (DPRD), 5 January 2001.

8 Data on Yogyakarta was provided by Ridaya Laode while FITRA tabulated the data on North Sumatra.

9 For example, an interview with T.Rizal Nurdin, Governor of North Sumatra, 7 July 2001.

10 Interview with Khairuddin, head of the Golkar faction in the Yogya regional parliament (DPRD), 5 January 2001.

11 Interview with Syukri Fadholi, Head of the PPP faction in the Yogya DPRD, now Deputy Mayor of Yogyakarta city, 15 December 2000.

12 Interview with Herman Abdul Rahman, member of DPRD-I Yogyakarta for the PPP, 14 December 2000.

13 Interview with Victor Simamora, member of the North Sumatra provincial parliament for the small Partai Bhineka Tunggal Ika, 3 July 2001. He made headlines in local newspapers when he suggested that some of his colleagues had offered themselves for bribes in the tendering of projects. Also interview with O.K.Azhari, PDI-P member of the Medan municipal parliament, 5 July 2001.

14 Interview with Hafidh Asrom, businessman, defeated candidate for the *bupati*-ship of Sleman, 9 December 2000.

15 Interview with John Andreas Purba, PDI-P member of Karo sub-provincial parliament, 6 July 2001.

16 Interviews with Syukri Fadholi, Head of the PPP faction in the Yogya DPRD, and now Deputy Mayor of Yogyakarta city, 15 December 2000, and with Herman Abdul Rahman, member of DPRD-I Yogyakarta for the PPP, 14 December 2000.

17 Under the existing system, mayors and *bupati,* or regents, are elected by members of the local legislature.

18 Interview with Yopie Batubara, 8 September 2001.

19 Interviews with Syukri Fadholi, then head of the PPP faction in the Yogya DPRD, and now Deputy Mayor of Yogyakarta, 15 December 2000, and with Herman Abdul Rahman, member of DPRD-I Yogyakarta for the PPP, 14 December 2000.
20 Interview with Herman Abdul Rahman, member of DPRD-I Yogyakarta for the PPP, 14 December 2000.
21 Interview with the late Ryadi Gunawan, PDI-P member of Yogyakarta legislature, 11 December 2000, and with O.K.Azhari, PDI-P parliamentarian in the city of Medan, North Sumatra, 5 July 2001. The latter comments that the PDI-P was such an open party that it welcomed 'thieves and murderers'.
22 The mobilization of lower class support for petty propertied or politically conservative interests is, of course, not historically unprecedented. Similar support was provided by sections of the European working classes in the 20th century to a number of populist and fascist regimes. Indeed the ubiquitous paramilitaries of such regimes—their uniformed goons and thugs—were largely working class-derived (Mann 1995:39–40).
23 Interview with Amir Purba, Dean, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Islamic University of North Sumatra, 5 July 2001; and data kindly compiled and supplied to me by Elfenda Ananda.
24 Interview, 6 July 2001.
25 Interview with Amir Purba, Dean, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Islamic University of North Sumatra, 5 July 2001. Data kindly compiled by Elfenda Ananda.
26 Interview with Muhammad Idham Samawi, *bupati* of Bantul, 12 December 2000.
27 Interview with Yopie Batubara, head of the North Sumatra Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 8 September 2001.
28 Interview with Amin Muftiana, YASANTI (labour NGO), 15 December 2000, and with Herwin Nasution, *Kelompok Pelita Sejahtera* (labour NGO), 4 July 2001.
29 Interview with Budi Dewantoro, Justice Party member of Yogyakarta provincial legislature, 13 December 2000.
30 For example, interview with Amran Y.S., North Sumatra provincial parliamentarian from PAN, 4 July 2001.
31 Interview with Elvi Rahmita Ginting, Medan city parliamentarian from PAN, 6 July 2001.
32 Interview with Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwono X, 15 December 2000, and with Mohammad Idham Samawi, 12 December 2000.
33 Interview with Syukri Fadholi, Head of the PPP faction in the Yogya DPRD, now Deputy Mayor of Yogyakarta, 15 December 2000.
34 Interview with Martius Latuperisa, Medan parliamentarian, 6 July 2001. A former member for Golkar, he is now with the Justice and Unity Party led by such former New Order stalwart General Edi Sudrajat.

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4
‘Hidden autonomy’
Understanding the nature of Indonesian decentralization on a day-to-day basis

Syarif Hidayat

Introduction

The wave of ‘political reform’ which followed the stepping down of President Suharto on 21 May 1998 appears to have pulled Indonesia toward a more democratic political system. The central government’s effort to reform the local government law (*Undang-Undang no. 5 tahun 1974* was replaced by *Undang-Undang no. 22 tahun 1999*) seems likewise to have offered a number of promises to local governments for a better future. However, a number of problems have already been identified as hindering the promise that regional autonomy offers for local populations. One of these is the practice of so-called KKN (*korupsi, kolusi dan nepotisme* or corruption, collusion and nepotism) which many argue has been spreading with decentralization from the centre to the local level governments with great intensity and rapidity.

In order to understand this spread of the practices of KKN, and what is therefore a considerable continuity between the earlier highly centralized era and this era of decentralization, I argue that it is necessary to look at the capacity for autonomous choices on the part of local actors. Other scholars have already suggested that to understand patterns of development in developing nations, it is necessary to look at elites/politicians and how the choices they make, in both the public and private domains, can shape the structure of local societies (Alavi 1972; Bates 1981; Warren 1973; Saul 1979). In the Indonesian context Liddle has argued, in a paper entitled ‘The Relative Autonomy of the Third World Politician’ (1996b), that policy making is not, in fact, done in the interests of the state qua state. In order to understand why policies are made and decisions are reached, one must look at the behaviour of the key actors, as those actors are in the process of formulating their goals, perceiving constraints and opportunities, and calculating means to deal with them.

The basic argument of this chapter is that Indonesian decentralization policy must therefore be examined as it is put into practice, on a day-to-day basis. I am suggesting that decentralization is far more complex than much of the scholarly literature on the subject suggests; it involves a great deal of bargaining and coalition-building among various actors at the local level. Indeed, even within

highly centralized political systems, such as that from which Indonesia has recently emerged, there are considerable opportunities for local governments to enjoy more autonomy in determining their own interests. Many of the studies done on decentralization focus on macro-level issues, and have overwhelmingly pointed to the significance of structural forces, such as the central government's formal arrangements, organizational reform, and even international political and economic forces, as the determining factors for decentralization (Maryanov 1959; Legge 1963; Mathur 1983; Rondinelli 1983; Morfit 1986; Mawhood 1987; King 1988).

My study instead shifts the focus of attention from a macro level down to a sectoral level. In doing so, I have concentrated more on investigating the capacity for autonomous choices on the part of local state actors, and exploring the impacts of these choices on local government policy in exercising decentralization. It is clear enough, of course, that central government forces have played an important role in conditioning and influencing the performance of decentralization. But it is less well understood that local governments have strongly determined the specific ways in which these forces affect them. To put it more precisely, the material discussed here will show how central government interests can, and do, influence local governments' policy, but only as they have been filtered through the local state actors' own perception of decentralization, goals for themselves, and the calculation of the best ways to achieve these goals.

'Hidden autonomy': decentralization on a day-to-day basis

There is a strong consensus in the scholarly literature that the implementation of decentralization in developing countries has essentially resulted in more concentration of power in the hands of the central government, and has led to the creation of a strong dependency of local governments on the central administration. This was true also for Indonesia during the New Order, where various laws—such as the local government law of 1974 and village law of 1979—which were supposed to be laws of 'decentralization', actually ended up tightening central government control of the regions. Although there had been a transfer of authority to local governments, the extent to which autonomy was granted remained limited. There is logic in what Legge (1963:13) wrote, that while the establishment of local governments in Indonesia was conceptually attached to the idea of democratization, the essence of regional autonomy remained an amalgam of central government needs to satisfy regional feelings and the need to provide general government. Morfit (1986) made it clear by arguing that, even though *inpres* (presidential decrees) and PDP (provincial development programmes) had been created and were officially aimed at strengthening the role of local governments, provincial governments were not completely free to determine their own interests. The objectives of the programmes were directed by the central government.

A number of aspects of my studies in West Java and West Sumatra done during the New Order period lead to different conclusions, however. First is the fact that local governments in the two research sites were able to access more autonomy than they should have been able to, both in making and implementing their own decisions. This was the result of the efforts of the local state elite to maximize the limitations of the central government's formal arrangements. I have called this 'hidden autonomy'. Second, decentralization at that time meant that there was room for considerable bargaining and coalition building among both state and society actors at the local level. Thus, third, decentralization had created more space for the local state-actors to pursue their own individual ends.

The central aim of this chapter, therefore, is to cast light on the way in which the Indonesian local governments have already, for a long time, exercised decentralization on a day-to-day basis, even finding power and authority within a centralized system. In this context I focus on investigating the behaviour of state and society actors at the local level in exercising particular decentralized power.[1] By looking at the local actors and elite in this way, at what have always been their opportunities for 'hidden autonomy', we can explore some of the continuities between a system that had limited decentralization and one which is based on a major decentralization, which at the same time gave autonomy to the regions. But if this decentralization and process of regional autonomy is breaking the dependency of local governments on the centre, is it in fact controlling the 'hidden autonomy' of elites, which has always been possible within the bureaucratized Indonesian system? By looking at what local elites see as the goals of decentralization and regional autonomy, we can see the reasons for the continuity, and thus gain some insight into the spread of KKN in the Indonesian decentralization process.

The subsequent discussion will begin by outlining the way in which two Indonesian local governments, in West Java and West Sumatra, exercised decentralized authority in land use planning during the New Order period. Most of that data was collected during one year of fieldwork in West Java and West Sumatra in 1996, and consisted of in-depth interviews with a large number of selected informants, comprising local bureaucrats, members of the DPRD (local parliament), journalists, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, and members of LSM (*lembaga swadaya masyarakat* or non-government organizations). They were randomly chosen from certain strata of the local bureaucracy and the local representative body in the research areas. In July to October 2001, a second fieldwork trip was undertaken in the same research sites, to discover what these local elites saw as the main goals of the newly implemented regional autonomy. Based on this comparative data I will argue that, at a practical level, the features of Indonesia's 'decentralization' in the post-New Order government are in many ways a continuation of the 'old' pattern.

Hidden autonomy during the New Order

The following cases, based on fieldwork in West Java and Sumatra, illustrate how various government policies during the New Order period allowed for decentralization of power to the provincial and regency levels. They show how local actors within the government responded to these opportunities and used them for their own benefits in what I call 'hidden autonomy'. It is realized that an attempt to coherently explore people's interests will often lead an observer into oversimplified arguments. For analytical purposes, however, it seems to be unavoidable to sketch a general feature of those individual interests. To attempt to solve this problem I will use the basic arguments of exchange theory as a point of departure. In the broadest sense, as outlined by Grindle, an exchange will occur when one needs resources that one does not have. This also happens at the organizational level where the resources which are controlled by other organization members, or by individuals outside the organization, are necessary to accomplish an organization's goals. To acquire these resources with efficiency and regularity, organization members may enter into an exchange relationship either inside or outside the organization (Grindle 1977:27).

The point emphasized here is that, although exchange theory seems to have attempted to avoid many difficulties of determining the coherent interest of individuals within an organization, it contains an explanation about the significance of an interplay between control over resources and the attainment of both organizational and individual goals. In the following discussions, I will delineate the local elites' interests underlying their relationship with the business and local communities. These will be distinguished on the basis of two major but overlapping categories of interests: public, or explicit, as opposed to private, or implicit, goals.

The Bandung Utara Case

Bandung Utara (Northern Bandung) is the local term given to a broad area in the northern part of the city of Bandung, in West Java, characterized by a range of hills at an altitude of 750 metres above sea level. Bandung Utara is an important area due to the tropical rainforest which covers almost all of the up-hill side and functions as the 'natural filter' for air pollution. This hillside on the northern part of Bandung had been designated *hutan lindung* (protected forest) since the Dutch occupation. The area was preserved from development activities after a Dutch hydrological study found a certain part of the hillside functioned as an area of groundwater absorption (Kunto 1986:106–37), as well as insulating the lowland area from the dangers of landslides and floods. Other studies have shown that this area is the source of groundwater for the whole Bandung area (for example, Geyh 1990).

Despite this, up until the end of the 1970s, there was no specific regulation created by the government designating a hydrological function for the Bandung

Utara region. Although, to a lesser extent, the term 'preservation area' had been applied to Bandung Utara, it was a continuation of the previous Dutch concept and was applied in a vague manner. Hence, it was not surprising that over time Bandung Utara became the subject of development activities.

In November 1982, the governor of West Java launched a regulation, the *surat keputusan gubernur kepala daerah tingkat I Jawa Barat, nomor* 181.1/SK.1624-Bapp/1982 (the Governor of West Java regulation no. 181/1982), that divided the land of Bandung Utara into three major categories:

1 *kawasan hutan lindung* (forest preservation area)
2 *kawasan pertanian tanaman keras* (area for commercial crops)
3 *kawasan pertanian non tanaman keras* (area for non-commercial crops).

Regulation no. 181 also specified the geographical boundary of those three area divisions, and defined the detailed plan for the allotment of the land use within each area. This regulation did not, however, challenge the wave of real estate development soon to emerge in this area. Only a few years after regulation no. 181, in December 1986, the first real estate developer's proposal was approved by the West Java provincial government—an application for a land use licence for about 70,000 square metres, located in the Cimahi Utara sub-district.

With this, it seemed a path had been opened and, as a result, a great number of real estate developers moved their business activities to this area. Provincial planning board *(Bappeda)* data recorded that, between 1986 and 1993, 43 land use licences were approved by the provincial government, mostly for constructing luxury residencies, villa estates and golf courses. A tremendous growth of the real estate industry in Bandung Utara occurred after the announcement of an Indonesian deregulation package, the so-called *Pakto 93*.[2] *Pakto 93* comprised deregulation policies that re-arranged the nature of both foreign and domestic investments. One of the policies in this packet[3] indirectly offered an extra authority to the *Daerah Tingkat IIs* (the *kabupaten* or regency level) that allowed them to play a leading role in organizing the allotment of land use for investment purposes.[4] As a consequence of this, most of the real estate developers' applications for obtaining both the *izin lokasi* (area licence) and the *izin mendirikan bangunan* (building licence) were ratified by the district governments, either by the Bandung regency or by the Bandung municipality *(kotamadya),* while prior to *Pakto 93,* both of those licences were issued by the provincial government.

According to the record of the Provincial Planning Board of West Java *(Bappeda Propinsi Daerah Tingkat I),* by December 1994, only a year after the launching of *Pakto 93,* there were about 48 real estate developers' applications to obtain land use licences that were ratified by local governments, and these occupied about 26.27 square kilometres of the Bandung Utara territory. Overall, the study found that, during the period of 1980 up to December 1994, the local government allowed approximately 91 real estate residencies to be constructed in

the Bandung Utara vicinity. When this figure is differentiated in terms of district administrative boundaries, the data suggest that the majority of those real estate sites (about 72) are located in the territorial division of the Bandung regency and only about 19 are sites in the administrative area of the *kotamadya* Bandung. To accommodate the tide of these development activities, Bandung Utara lost approximately 51.87 square kilometres (5,180 hectares) of its original area, most of which had been determined as conservation area, according to the Governor of West Java's regulation no. 181/1982.

In order to justify the correctness of their policy in the Bandang Utara area, local state elites employed local intellectuals to validate their actions. In doing so, a number of studies were sponsored by the provincial government and channelled through the provincial *Bappeda*. These were essentially aimed at re-interpreting the Governor of West Java's regulation no. 181/1982 that had legally determined the Bandung Utara as a conservation area. Just to mention a few examples, in 1994 one of leading universities in West Java was asked to be in charge of a study entitled 'Studi Evaluasi Tata Ruang di Kawasan Bandung Utara' ('An Evaluation of the Bandung Utara Master Plan'). In the following year, the same university in association with the BAKO-SURTANAL *(Badan Koordinasi Survey dan Pementaan Nasional)* was asked to conduct aerial photography for the Bandung Utara area.[5] The result of these studies and photographs was to show that the provincial government had not erred in its developments, despite mounting criticism.

Local elites' public interests and private interests

The Bandung Utara area was opened to real estate, despite its designation as a conservation area, because of the decentralization of the authority to give licences to real estate developers at the local level, and the use of that authority in various ways to serve the interests of local elites. The 'hidden autonomy' exercised by these local elites was used for both public and private interests. The first public interest that was manipulated by the local state elite, to justify the local government's decision to open the Bandung Utara area to the real estate industry, was to generate the involvement of the private sector in the execution of its programmes. Actually, this form of interest does not only take place in the field of housing policy, but also in almost all local government development activities. A classical explanation for this is the insufficiency of the *pendapatan asli daerah* (PAD or local revenue) to support development expenditure, including the housing programmes, so funds must come from elsewhere.[6]

The second public interest underlying elites' relationship with real estate developers was the need to reflect local government support of the central government's policy on private developers participating in adding to the stock of housing nationwide. This policy was applied in the 'First Long Term Development Programme' (1969/70 to 1994/95) through the creation of a national housing programme (developing residences for people of upper-middle

income), which was carried out by private developers under the coordination of the BTN bank. This programme seems to have been successful because, by the end of the New Order's first long-term development programme, REI (Real Estate Indonesia) had successfully completed more than 400,000 housing units.

Private interests are of course multiple, but for analytical purposes can be distinguished according to two specific ends: financial gain and career advancement.

Writing in 1988, Robison (1988:65) outlined that one of the factors underlying the alliances between Indonesian politico-bureaucrats and individual capitalists was that the client capitalists gave the politico-bureaucrats access to revenue for political and personal needs, as well as entry to the world of corporate capitalism as shareholders and investors. Robison's findings, to some extent, provide useful guidance for explaining the characteristic of alliances between West Java local elites and individual real estate developers, since there is evidence which indicates that the need to accumulate economic benefits also motivated the West Java local elites to enter into these alliances.

The characteristics of local elites' search for financial gain vary from person to person, because they are basically determined by the forms and the degree of authority exercised by each local elite. The study suggested that those who had a position in the middle-lower level of local bureaucracy, and who held less power in controlling land use licences and the distribution of basic social infrastructure, would probably gain rewards from their clients in the form of a direct additional income, what is called *uang toll*. This is an extra payment which is usually given by real estate developers to facilitate the administrative processing of their applications. On the other hand, the upper-middle local elites, who possessed more power in controlling the allocation of land use licences and the distribution of basic social infrastructure, were seldom, if ever, offered a direct extra payment. For these people, real estate developers offered other rewards, such as a unit of housing, or possibly offers of shareholding and investment in certain real estate companies. The distribution of these rewards, however, was not automatic. It was determined by the extent to which the local state elite's power was used to fulfil the requests of his or her clients.

Another economic end was the local elites' need to secure the continuity of a 'family business'. As Robison (1988:20) wrote, the strength of Indonesian politico-bureaucrats' family businesses seems to be rooted in their access to finance and government control over certain concessions. Perhaps the best example of this is Rama Sangkuni,[7] a former senior official at the provincial level in West Java. His children had been actively involved in property and real estate since the first term of his position in the governor's office. Later their activities expanded into certain inter-related property businesses, such as developing golf courses, and acting as consultants for the formulation of certain district master plans. There was evidence that indicated Rama Sangkuni's eldest son was one of the big real estate developers who pioneered the real estate residential projects in the Bandung Utara area. The point to be emphasized here is that while Robison's

study sketches politico-bureaucrat family businesses at the national level, the present study shows that the same phenomenon also occurred at the local level, where occupying a position of power that helped the family business was probably the main characteristic of the Rama Sangkuni case.

The desire for career advancement is the second motivation for local elites' relationship with real estate developers. Local officials sought alliances with certain real estate businessmen who had strong ties with their superiors. These businessmen possibly had a family tie with a *pejabat daerah* (a local official) or an individual connection with the *pejabat atasan* (the local officials' superiors). Success in solving the problems of these particular real estate developers—to obtain a land use licence, for instance—was seen by the local officials involved in the alliance network as a credit point or, as one of the senior bureaucrats at the provincial level called it, a *konduite* or channel, for their career advancement. The existence of the *katebelece* system is one of the means by which these networks are activated. The *katebelece* is a personal letter issued by a senior official that can be used as a tool to facilitate, and even to short-cut, formal administrative procedures.

These collusive and nepotistic practices were a constraint that the local government had to deal with in the allotment of land in the Bandung Utara area, but at the same time it allowed local elites to manipulate these networks and 'gain points' for their career advancement. Central to understanding this situation is the capacity of the client developers to navigate secretly between particular local officials and their superiors. It is common in Indonesia that, although in the legal formal sense the businessmen themselves do not have any direct authority to promote local officials' career, their family ties with and the *katebelece* from those who hold the authority seem to be useful instruments for this purpose. As a consequence, the extent of family relationships that a real estate developer has, plus the strength of his *katebelece,* significantly influences the way in which a local elite treats his corporate network.

The Padang by-pass case

A central feature of this case was the way in which both policy formulation and implementation at the local level were marked by the interaction of state and societal actors, although these were much more dominated by the need of local state actors to mobilize societal support for their plan. In addition, the West Sumatra elites, specifically the Municipality of Padang officials, carefully and respectfully channelled their interests through a traditional Minangkabau (indigenous peoples of West Sumatra) organization, the *Kerapatan Adat Nagari* (KAN). The Minangkabau hereditary leaders' *(ninik mamak)* participation was managed through this organization. The involvement of *ninik mamak* was seen as essential by the local elites because they had the potential influence to generate the landowners' support for the process of land clearance for the Padang by-pass projects.

The Padang by-pass was a highway project that encompassed two of West Sumatra's district governments' administrative territories—the municipality of Padang and the regency of Pariaman. It was first mooted in the 1980s because of problems with traffic congestion in and around Padang. The idea also was that a highway would encourage the growth of industry outside of the city.[8] In 1987 Korean Consultant International (KCI) was asked to conduct a detailed engineering study. Their report suggested that within five years the city would have a major urban crisis if a highway was not built to ease congestion. Specifically, it is asserted in the KCI's final remarks:

> Our study concludes that while the existing infrastructure in Padang is generally sufficient to meet the needs of 1986, this is largely because of the slow growth of vehicle movements in the mid-1980s. Yet even at very low rates of growth, by 1991 the city will face a grave urban crisis, as the continued growth of inter-city transport and especially the growth of the port of Teluk Bayur will cause a severe arterial congestion through the whole length of the city. …Accordingly the sooner the opening of the main phase of the by-pass, the better
>
> Korean Consultant International (1987:12–13)

The KCI's study became the basis for two alternatives which the Minister for Public Works offered as a response to the Kotamadya Padang government's proposal for a highway. The first alternative was a *jalan tol* (a toll road), where all of the land clearance and construction costs would be completely borne by the central government. The second alternative was a by-pass, where the role of the central government would be only to provide for the construction costs, while the land clearance and its costs would be the local government's responsibility. The Padang municipal government's decision in this case was quite surprising, because it favoured the second alternative. Among the arguments attached to this decision was that the construction of a by-pass would be more beneficial to the Padang inhabitants, especially those who lived along the roadside, compared to a toll road.[9]

While the easing of traffic congestion was the explicit goal of the Padang by-pass project, there were also certain implicit goals attached to the project. My interest in this matter arose through direct observation of the case at the very beginning of the my fieldwork. I was surprised by the fact that most of the key informants—some selected Padang inhabitants who live along the Padang by-pass road—referred to the newly developed road as the Bagindo by-pass (Bagindo is one of the previous mayors of the City of Padang),[10] instead of the Padang by-pass. This was because many informants, both bureaucrats and those from the local Minangkabau leadership, were impressed by the role that Bagindo had taken in lobbying his superiors—the West Sumatra governor and the Minister for Transportation—with a view to push the Padang by-pass proposal

through and mobilizing both Minangkabau informal leaders' and land-owners' participation in the land-clearance process.

In-depth interviews that I conducted with some of Bagindo's closest subordinates shed some light on why Bagindo was so committed to constructing the by-pass.[11] According to these interviewees, Bagindo was coming to the end of his second period as Mayor of Padang when the decision about the highway had to be made.[12] Since he could not be chosen for a third term, the only option for him was to attempt to move up, that is gain the necessary political credit to try for the position of governor. Successful completion of the highway would be an important credit in his favour.

As outlined earlier, in response to the two alternatives suggested by the Minister for Public Works in 1988, the Padang municipal government decided to choose the second option, the by-pass, instead of the toll road. Consequently, although the whole construction cost for the Padang by-pass would be provided by the central government, the process of land clearance and its costs were to become the local government's responsibility. It is in this context we will see the importance of the 'land consolidation system' *(sistim konsolidasi tanah)* adopted by the local government as the model for land clearance. The *sistim konsolidasi tanah perkotaan* ('urban land consolidation') is a model for re-organizing land masses so that they will be more orderly, and can thus be used for various developments. It is done through land displacement, land merging, land exchange, land division and so forth (Azhar 1994:3).

The final outcome of this model provides 'ready-built sites' which have access to the main road and other social and economic infrastructure. The government, either central or local government, assumes the responsibility for conducting land consolidation, that is restructuring the land shape and mapping the ready-built sites. Land-owners benefit from this consolidation, since they can then do something useful with the land and the value will increase. As compensation for this work, the land-owners have to transfer a portion of their land (usually a percentage) to the government. Theoretically the land contribution given to the government is to be used only for provision of public services.

In West Sumatra there were publicly two major reasons why the local government introduced this model.[13] First was the need to involve the community in the development; the use of the land consolidation system was seen as the best way to involve the Minangkabau people in developing their own home town. Thus the government participation in consolidating the land resulted in the community contribution of land for the Padang by-pass project. The second reason was to increase the value of the land, since the consolidated land would be more orderly and efficient, and hence the purchasing value would increase.

However, a closer investigation of the considerations underlying the local government's application of the land consolidation system suggests that there were a series of implicit reasons behind the decision that were actually very important.

On the one hand, the central government was pioneering a new method of developing a by-pass, while on the other, for the local government it was a useful way to avoid financial burdens resulting from the land-clearance process.

The area which was involved in the land consolidation for the Padang by-pass project is mainly characterized as *harato pusako tinggi*. According to the Minangkabau tradition, the land included in this category is not owned by an individual, but by a clan, hence it is a communal possession. Clan members' rights are not in the form of ownership, but rather in use or cultivation rights (von Benda-Beckmann 1979; HAMKA 1968). The *harato pusako tinggi,* according to Minangkabau custom, is not subject to be bought and sold *(diperjual-belikan),* unless something extraordinary takes place. The *harato pusako tinggi* can be sold only when it is acquired by the *nagari* (supra-clan) government to be used for housing sites, or when the *urang saharato sapusako* (a lineage-group) is extinct (von Benda-Beckmann 1979:168–9; HAMKA 1968:29). It can be pawned only if the circumstances match the 'four qualifications' *(syarat nan ampek)*.[14]

When the plan for constructing the Padang by-pass road was to be put into place, and the land consolidation system was suggested, many debated whether it would work because of the Minangkabau land ownership system. Moreover, since the land clearance brought no financial compensation to the community, the social and political costs resulting from this work might be much more than the total purchasing cost of the land itself.[15] It was Bagindo who convinced everyone that the use of the land consolidation system was valid in this case. In a meeting which was held in early 1989,[16] Bagindo insisted that many local officials misinterpreted the Minangkabau land system; he argued that Minangkabau customs were not a threat to the local government programmes. Bagindo insisted that considerations for choosing this model were not only because the local government would minimize its expenditure for the land clearance, but also because it was the most suitable method to incorporate the Minangkabau land ownership system. Bagindo referred to one of the principles of the Minangkabau tradition which says: the *harato pusako tinggi* is not allowed to be sold or be bought but can be acquired by the *nagari* government for development purposes. This meant, Bagindo argued, local government should not need to pay for the land for the Padang by-pass because the *harato pusako tinggi* cannot be bought and sold. But when it is acquired by government for development purposes, the *harato pusako tinggi* can be obtained freely. At the same time, Bagindo emphasized the importance of including KAN *(Kerapatan Adat Nagari)* on the management board for the Padang by-pass project. Technically, KAN was the most appropriate Minangkabau organization to be employed by the local government to mobilize the landowners' participation in the accomplishment of the land-clearance process. And politically, including KAN on the management board would show that the local government did not intend to undermine the Minangkabau traditions in the implementation of its development programmes.[17]

Bagindo ensured their participation and then approached the head *(ketua)* of KAN, maximizing the influence of his long-established personal connection with them. This is the core point of understanding the success achieved by the West Sumatra local government in the process of the land clearance for the Padang bypass project. The most successful tactic adopted by Bagindo was that he approached the Minangkabau leaders to conduct an informal dialogue with them.[18] In this way the Minangkabau informal leaders felt that the local government needed their help, not that it was exploiting them. At the same time the informal dialogue suggested that the local government did not intend to use its formal authority vis-à-vis that of the Minangkabau informal leaders.[19] The latter point is important, because once the Minangkabau informal leaders had the impression that the government would use its formal authority over them, they would feel humiliated and efforts to seek their support would fail.[20]

This informal dialogue took place when Bagindo invited certain Minangkabau informal leaders to his office. The stated aim of this meeting was to discuss matters concerned with the land consolidation system. In essence, however, Bagindo endeavoured to use this meeting to assure the heads of KAN of the benefits of the land consolidation system for those who would be involved in the Padang by-pass project, in particular. It was explained by Datuk P,[21] that:

> Actually, KAN was already involved in the Padang by-pass since the very beginning stage of this project, the preparation phase for the land clearance. By that time Pak Bagindo invited all of the heads of KAN and its members to the *Balai Kota* (town hall) to seek our opinion about implementing the land consolidation system. Directly to the point, it was asserted by Pak Bagindo in his speech that the bottom line was the local government eventually decided to adopt the land consolidation system because it had been seen the most suitable model in accordance with the Minangkabau custom, and would guarantee more benefits to the land-owners, in particular, and the community, in general.
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> Nevertheless, as insisted by Pak Bagindo at the end of his speech, all this remains at the conceptual level. The success or failure in bringing it to completion would be determined by our commitment. 'It is, therefore', Pak Bagindo argued, 'in this moment I would share my opinion with all of the *datuk-datuk* [Minangkabau informal leaders] who have pleasantly attended this informal meeting. Please do not hesitate to give me advice, or even to criticise my opinion'.

It was admitted by Datuk P that all the Minangkabau informal leaders who were invited to the meeting immediately agreed with Bagindo's opinion, and offered their support to the local government. On top of that, the heads of KAN did not hesitate when they were asked to sign a letter, which stated that the *Ketua* KAN would fully associate with the Padang municipal government in the accomplishment of the land-clearance process. They also guaranteed that the

Minangkabau land ownership system would not become a major constraint for this work.

'Hidden autonomy': an analysis

In the previous section I have outlined the ways in which local governments have exercised power under limited decentralization. As I have suggested, decentralization during the New Order involved a lot of bargaining and coalition-building among both state and societal actors at the local level for the pursuit of both public and private ends, explicit and implicit goals. The evidence provided by these case studies has pointed to the fact that the lack of local governments' decentralized authority, at least in the case of local authority in land use planning, does not necessarily mean limiting local governments from having autonomy in determining their own interests. This emerged in the form I have termed 'hidden autonomy'. Moreover, it is also indicated that to some extent a limited amount of decentralization created the space for community participation, but at the same time, it provided greater opportunity for local state actors to pursue their own ends.

If conclusions arising from this study make sense, they explicitly point to the importance of local state elites' behaviour in determining the implementation of decentralization on a day-to-day basis. The question then is, how do we place the findings of this study into the broader discussion about Indonesia's local politics? Specifically, how can we explain the connection between local state elites' behaviour and the performance of decentralization on the one hand, and the existence of that hidden autonomy and the local politico-bureaucrats self-seeking on the other?

As I suggested at the beginning of this chapter, Liddle's (1996b) approach in analysing the 'relative autonomy' of politicians in the developing world has been useful to my own analysis. Liddle utilizes the concept of 'rational choice' to analyse the individual political leaders' motivations and preferences in making decisions, keeping in mind that political leaders make choices to build and maintain support in different circumstances. He explicitly points to policy makers' perception of the matters they are dealing with, their own goals, and their calculations of how best to achieve these goals to have a fundamental impact on shaping the final outcome of a policy. At the same time he keeps in mind the role of structural forces in determining policy outcome, such as political and economic forces, leadership ideology and regime type. To accommodate all of these variables in the context of policy analysis, Liddle has, instead, placed the individual political leaders' motivations and preferences as the 'connective-tissue' between the structural forces and the policy outcome.[22] Liddle (1996b:109) applied this approach in the context of Indonesian economic development policy:

> President Suharto's economic policy decisions were conditioned or influenced but not determined by four variables widely cited but often misconceived and misapplied in the Indonesian and comparative literature. These variables are: economic crisis; international economic forces; culture, particularly the form of leadership ideology; and regime type, specifically patrimonialism. Each, I will claim, has an impact on policy, but only as it has been filtered through President Suharto's perceptions of their nature and impact, goals for himself and his society, and calculations of how best to achieve his goals.

There is no claim that the key policy makers in the two research sites have the same capacity to make autonomous choices as possessed by Suharto.

Following Liddle (1996b:109), therefore, it can be argued that local state actors' decisions in implementing decentralization policy are conditioned or influenced, but not determined, by central government's political and economic interests, and even the interest of local society. The factors that determine local policy decisions in practical terms are the local state elites' own perception of decentralization, their own goals, and their calculation of the best ways to achieve these goals. Consequently, to understand better the features of decentralization, scholars should pay more attention to the interaction between these variables and the local state elites' behaviour in practising decentralization policy.

As discussed at the outset, there were various 'implicit goals' underlying the local government's decisions in these two cases. In Bandung Utara, the decisions to allow the conservation area to be used for the real estate industry were based on 'short-term' economic ends, the need to secure the local politico-bureaucrat's family business. In the case of the Padang by-pass decisions had a lot do with the 'implicit' goals of the mayor of Padang. Bagindo's own desire to generate political reputation and even 'credit points' for his nomination to the governorship in 1992 was a major reason for the choices that were made. To accomplish these goals, local state elites appeared to have successfully combined two major strategies, claiming to be fulfilling national needs and following central government policyeven though there might have been some irregularity in what they did—and using local knowledge and local support to validate their actions.

In the Bandung case there was a manipulation of the central government's policy concerning the provision of national housing stock. Local state elites asserted that to fulfil the housing development quota given by central government, and with a view to encouraging the involvement of private developers in the provision of housing stock, local governments had to open up the area of Bandung Utara because of unavailability of other large tracts of cheap land surrounding the city area. They also utilized local knowledge and support by employing local intellectuals to justify the correctness of their policy toward the

Bandung Utara areacommissioning university studies to legitimate their decisions.

In the Padang by-pass case, the tactics adopted by Bagindo to push this project through were, first of all, to convince the central government about the fundamental need to construct the Padang by-pass for regional economic development. This also had to do with confirming a distinctiveness about the Padang by-pass project compared to others—since at that time the North Sulawesi provincial government was also proposing a Manado by-pass. To do this Bagindo suggested the 'land consolidation system' as the model for land clearance. He thus attempted to introduce a pioneering model implementing land consolidation in the construction of a by-pass road. His success in this generated much popularity for Bagindo, in addition to 'credit points' for his career advancement. His success in using this model, especially since there was no compensation for the land owners, lay in Bagindo's maximizing the roles of the Minangkabau traditional leaders *(ninik-mamak),* channelled through KAN. These traditional leaders persuaded the land owners to support the local government plan for the Padang by-pass, and in association with other members of the committee, were involved in acknowledging and handling complaints arising from the land-clearance process.

It is worth pausing here to ask the question: if the basic thesis about the significance of local state elites' autonomous choices in determining the final outcome of decentralization policy is valid, what explains their capacity to do so? Borrowing Liddle's cultural change framework, the answers to this question have to do with the concept of resources: the means or 'factors of production' that give weight to the social and political demands of individuals and groups (1996a:152). According to Liddle, by having access to accumulated resources, 'intellectual, persuasive, utilitarian, and/or coercive', individual actors are able to influence, directly or indirectly, the values, beliefs and customs of many others (1996a:145). The same line of argument, then, may also be constructed for the current study. Put simply, there are four factors to local state elites' capacity to make autonomous choices centred on their access to accumulated resources:

1 skill in interpreting central government policy
2 knowledge of the local problems
3 alliances with particular societal groups
4 individual connections with central state elites.

In the context of the Bandung Utara case, for instance, the local state elites' skill in re-interpreting central government policy was partly shown by the governor's and his colleagues' ability to manipulate the central government plan for the provision of national housing stock in order to justify their own policy. This subsequently was complemented by their knowledge of the local problems, so they could assert that the provincial government allowed the Bandung Utara area for real estate development because of the unavailability of large tracts of cheap

land surrounding the metropolitan city of Bandung. The same modus operandi seems to have been used in the Padang by-pass case. Although Bagindo and his senior officials also manipulated central government macro-economic policy with a view to justify the importance of constructing the Padang by-pass, this became more meaningful when their knowledge of the local problems was added. For example, it was asserted that the construction of the Padang by-pass would not only help the local government to cope with the traffic congestion problems, but it would also contribute to the growth of industry in the City of Padang hinterland.

The third important factor in determining the capacity of local state elites to make autonomous choices is their alliances with certain societal groups. In both cases presented here, we have seen how these resources were generated and employed by the key policy makers in the two research sites for pursuits of their own choice. In West Java, for instance, some local intellectuals were asked to conduct a number of studies which were essentially aimed at justifying local government policy in the Bandung Utara area. While in West Sumatra, a number of Minangkabau *ninik-mamak* were involved on the committee for the Padang bypass project, they were mainly given the task to mobilize landholders' participation in the land-clearance processes.

Individual connections with central elites is the fourth factor determining local state elites' capacity to make autonomous choices. Unfortunately, we do not have enough data to illuminate specifically how this resource has been generated and employed in the two cases. But there is a strong basis for believing that it has a part in sharpening local state elites' policy over both the Bandung Utara and the Padang by-pass projects. The Governor of West Java's individual connection with the Minister of Home Affairs, for instance, seems to have played an important role in determining the West Java provincial government's policy over the Bandung Utara area. The Minister was the governor's predecessor and he was the first of West Java's governors to allow the Bandung Utara to be used for real estate sites. A similar assumption may also be made in the context of the Padang by-pass case. Bagindo's personal connection with the Minister for Transportation may have had a significant impact on his capacity to push the Padang by-pass project through. Again this minister had been governor of the relevant province (West Sumatra) before becoming minister, and it was while he was governor that Bagindo had been appointed to key positions prior to being made mayor.

Goals of decentralization

My second period of fieldwork conducted in West Java and West Sumatra after the implementation of new regional autonomy laws was aimed at understanding how local elites understood the new laws on decentralization and regional autonomy and what it meant for them. I found that on the whole local elites

tended to voice their support for the new government legislation, law no. 22/1999 and law no. 25/1999.

What was interesting is that the local elites tended to talk about decentralization as the transfer of certain 'governmental affairs' *(urusan pemerintahan)* from the central to the local governments, instead of using the words 'the transfer of political power', indicating a playing down of the political side of decentralization. When they were questioned why they gave this kind of definition, it became apparent that the definition has been developed according to certain political values and norms constructed by the central government. The following oppositions were repeatedly mentioned by the local elites as their main argument to rationalize their definition of decentralization: there must be a unitary state versus federal state; there must be political stability versus a chaotic, uncontrolled decentralization; there must be economic development versus a counterproductive decentralization. In this respect, in fact, they tended to emphasize the economic goals for decentralization, rather than the political goals. For example, they referred to the main aim of decentralization as to enhance local government responsiveness in dealing with regional development, and to achieve more efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of economic policy.

There were some politicians in West Java who favoured political goals for decentralization, such as to exercise democratization at the local level, however, the arguments were still constructed in conformity to the established rules. One local politician stated:

> I do agree with the political goal for decentralization which is stated for exercising democracy at the local level. But we have to interpret the word 'democracy' in the sense of a unitary state, not in the sense of a federal state. This means, even though local governments are allowed, for instance, to elect their own *Kepala Daerah* and to formulate certain local regulations, all of these have to be acknowledged by the central government.
>
> Member of the West Java's provincial DPRD

Those who favoured the idea of the economic goals of decentralization cautioned about the danger of giving local governments full political autonomy, as this would threaten the unity of the nation and national political stability, which in turn would affect the sustainability of economic development. On the whole, the economic goals for decentralization were considered the more important and worthwhile.

On the surface, therefore, all local elites professed to support the government's aim to guarantee the continuity of the national political integration and the sustainability of the national economic development plan. However, further assessment reveals another picture of local state elites' perception of decentralization. Although they have advocated the central government's

definition and goals for decentralization, and even accepted the formal setting of local government authority, in real terms what was important to them was the pursuit of short-term goals. As explained by one of West Sumatra's senior officials, local government officials must be *pandai-pandai* (smart but careful) to pursue their interests vis-à-vis the central government. So that while at a conceptual level local state elites demonstrated their commitment to the central government's norms and values, and even their conformity with the established rules, they do in fact have their own specific ways of defining decentralization. This can be seen also in terms of their practical definitions and justification of decentralization and local autonomy. Local elites tended to talk about local autonomy as the local freedom to regulate local needs or manage local resources. There were even elites who defined local autonomy as limited local freedom toward national integration. These ideas are different from the definition in law no. 22/1999.

This ambivalent view was also seen in the context of local state elites' opinion of the main goals for decentralization and local autonomy. Some informants said that the main purpose of decentralization and local autonomy is to embody social welfare. However, when we further questioned the reasons why social welfare should be the main target of the implementation of decentralization and local autonomy, the local state elites' argument emphasized how important it was for local authorities to increase local income in order to achieve social welfare. In other words, the substance of their arguments did not focus on aspects that are important to achieve local self-government,[23] but instead on local incomes.

The question, then, is what are the implications of these ambivalent views to the implementation for local autonomy? The answer to this question seems to be clear enough, that is the local state elites' ambivalent views can directly or indirectly affect their behaviour in implementing decentralization and local autonomy policies. At a practical level, there is a strong tendency for the local state elites in the two research sites to use these pragmatic views as tools to validate any discretionary act (positive or negative) made by the local government in implementing local policies. Concrete forms of these types of discretionary act can be seen, inter alia, in the behaviour of local state elites who translated local autonomy into the local freedom to impose local taxes, or other charges, as they liked to increase local income. These attitudes and actions are consistent with the 'hidden autonomy' that was already at work to maximize private goals in the earlier, centralized era.

My other study (2002) in three of Indonesia's provinces (Riau, Banten and Nusa Tenggara Barat) seems to have supported the research findings from West Java and West Sumatra outlined above. Briefly, the study indicates that the practice of local state elites' autonomous choices in both making and implementing local policies continues to exist, and even increases. In other words, the enactment of law no. 22/1999 and law number 25/1999 has widened the room for local state elites to pursue both public and private goals. Within this condition, the implementation of decentralization, then, continues to be

characterized by bargaining and coalition building among local state elites, and it is undeniable that the decision making process also tends to be concentrated in the hands of a few people, especially those who assume the power in the local governments *(pemerintah daerah)* and local parliaments (DPRD).

The arguments used by local elites to justify their actions are quite intriguing. The study suggests that pointing to the unclear features of the laws, the delay of issuing central government regulations *(peraturan pemerintah)* and bringing forth the local community demands have become the main arguments of the local elites to rationalize such discretionary acts as they make in exercising local government decentralized authority. The point that should be underlined here is the fact that the conflicting features of the laws, the delaying of central government regulations, and the opening up of channels for society participation, have been manipulated by local level elites to justify their continuing the practice of autonomous choice in making and implementing such decisions.

Concluding remarks

To emphasize, then, this chapter concludes that Indonesian decentralization policy on a day-to-day basis is far more complex than the scholarly literature on the subject suggests;[24] it involves more bargaining and coalition building among both state and society actors at the local level. The key to understanding this phenomenon lies in the 'relative capacity' of local state elites to make autonomous choices.

The telling factor explaining the capacity of local state elites to exercise autonomous choices is their access to accumulated political resources. Amongst other things these lie in their skill in re-interpreting central government policies; knowledge of local problems; alliances with particular societal groups; and individual connections with central state elites. If this argument makes sense, it is now clear enough that the conflicting nature of central government policies and the dominance of Indonesian bureaucratic patrimonialism, as indicated by the first and the fourth category of resources, have partly contributed to the shaping of local state elites' capacity to make autonomous choices. Meanwhile the rest have been driven by the local state elites' efforts to manipulate societal interests. These factors were at work in the earlier era of centralization, when certain authorities were decentralized to the local governments, and they are even more apparent now in the era where decentralization is far greater and local autonomy of regional governments is enshrined in the law. But what this 'autonomy' means, as in the earlier era, continues to be autonomy used as much in the pursuit of individual, private goals, as it is in the pursuit of public goals that are meant to incorporate local aspirations.

Consequently, this chapter has implications for future work. It suggests that to understand better the features of Indonesian decentralization in practical terms, scholars should pay more attention to the capacity for autonomous choice on the part of local state elites, look with insight on the sources of their choices, and

observe closely how they accumulate, mobilize and deploy those resources. Above all, scholars should give greater weight to the importance of interaction between these autonomous choices and the behaviour of local state elites in practising decentralization on a day-to-day basis.

Notes

1 The term 'decentralized power' is used to denote the authorities that have been decentralized by the central government to local governments.
2 This stands for *Paket 23 Oktober 1993,* the governmental regulation package of 1993.
3 This policy was the *Keputusan Presiden Republik Indonesia, Nomor 97, Tahun 1993* (the presidential decree, no. 97/1993)
4 This can be seen, for instance, in Chapter I (5.b) of the presidential decree no. 97 which states: 'kepala kantor pertanahan kabupaten kotamadya mengeluarkan izin lokasi sesuai rencana tata ruang' (the head of the central government agency in charge of land affairs at the district/ municipal city levels issues the area licence on the basis of a local land use plan).
5 See, for instance, the head of provincial Bappeda's letter, no. 660/480-Bappeda/95, which was sent to the Bappenas on 19 May 1995.
6 Insufficiency of PAD is particularly important in the regional autonomy era, but it is not a new problem faced by Indonesia's local governments. During the New Order, on average the contribution of PAD to the total local government expenditure was about 20 per cent. Using the problem of PAD even then was manipulated by local state elites as a justification for the practice of 'hidden autonomy'.
7 Rama Sangkuni is a pseudonym.
8 This information was received in an interview with AM, which was conducted in November 1995. He is an official at the Kotamadya Padang's Bappeda (regional planning office) who was involved in the formulation of the City of Padang master plan for 1983–2003. Other information regarding this matter was also gathered from a series of Kotamadya Padang documents. Among other things are the *peraturan daerah no. 10 tahun 1983,* about the Kotamadya Padang master plans for 1983– 2003; and an unpublished document entitled *Proyek Jalan By Pass di Kota Padang* (documented by the Kotamadya Padang's Bappeda, in 1988).
9 An interview with DJ, November 1995. The official documents regarding this matter can be seen in Kantor Pertanahan Kotamadya Padang (1994), *Pembangunan Jalan Padang By Pass dengan Sistem Kosolidasi Tanah,* Padang: Pemerintah Daerah Kotamadya Padang.
10 *Bagindo* is not his real name.
11 These interviews were conducted in November 1995.
12 The project started in 1989 and finished in 1994. Bagindo was to finish his term as mayor in 1992.
13 Most of the information presented here was gathered mainly on the basis of in-depth interviews with two of the local government senior officials, NH and AF, which were held in November 1995 and January 1996.

14 These are *rumah gadang katirisan* (the family house needs to be repaired); *membangkik batang terandam* (to install the clan head, *Datuk Suku*); *gadis gadang alun balaki* (the grown-up girl is still without a husband, i.e., money is required for the wedding ceremonies); and finally, *maik tabuju di tangah rumah* (the corpse lies in the middle of the house, i.e., money is required for the burial ceremony) (von Benda-Beckmann 1979:170; HAMKA 1968:30).
15 An interview with ZM, November 1995.
16 As it was explained in an interview with AS in November 1995.
17 An interview with NH, November 1995.
18 An interview with AS, November 1995.
19 An interview with NH, November 1995.
20 An interview with MN, October 1995.
21 The interview with Datuk P was conducted in November 1995. The immediate importance of Datuk P is that he is one of the Minangkabau informal leaders who, from the beginning, had advocated the use of the land consolidation system, and he had also played significant roles during the implementation of this concept.
22 In this respect, therefore, I believe that Liddle has made an innovative development in the field of rational choice theory. Marsh and Stoker (1995:80) point out that sociologists often criticize rational choice theory because it appears to play down social structure and a holistic model of explanation. Meanwhile, the critique from mainstream political science is based on the implausibility of assumptions made and the predictive failures of the model. Liddle, however, attempts to minimize these weaknesses by putting together both structural forces and individual preferences to become the 'influential' and the 'determinant' factors of policy making.
23 For example what and how to formulate development programmes to optimize the available resources that could be potentially owned, as the local people aspired.
24 See for example, Maryanov (1959); Legge (1963); Mathur (1983); Rondinelli (1983); Morfit (1986); Mawhood (1987); King (1988).

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5
Decentralization and the military

Sukardi Rinakit

Discourses on regional autonomy, especially those concerning local government grievances, have been taking place since the establishment of the Republic. A long series of regulations can attest to that—from regulation numbers 1/1945, 22/1948, 1/1957, 18/1965, 5/1974, up to 22/1999 and 25/1999. If we study the background to these regulations, it seems that their effectiveness was only part of the central government's attempts to please regional governments. Although the 1999 regulations were decreed during the reform era, just like the previous regulations they are actually highly centralistic (Haris 2002). It can be claimed, therefore, that the regional autonomy policies of the central government are really only half-hearted. Hidayat (2001) calls this phenomenon 'the rhetoric of decentralization'. This rather unenthusiastic attitude of the central government toward granting extensive autonomy has been challenged by many demands to revise the regulations 22/ 1999 on regional autonomy and 25/1999 on fiscal balance. In the eyes of many, the two regulations have yet to give the extensive authority to local governments that is mandated by the reform movement. Therefore, they must be revised.

Many studies (Pilliang 2002; Sugiarto 2002) on this controversial issue, however, have so far ignored the role of the Indonesian military (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia,* TNI) in the policy of decentralization. The military, as one of the former New Order pillars (besides Golkar and the bureaucracy), has huge political resources. These include arms, political positions and businesses. An understanding of the military's perception of decentralization is therefore vital. How does the military actually perceive decentralization?

The military's perception of decentralization[1]

In the military's view, the decentralization policies—if not implemented carefully —will become a threat to national integration. This is because the authority of local governments will become too extensive. As Indonesia is so diverse in terms of ethnicity, religion, demography, politics and social classes, horizontal conflicts are likely to break out.[2] Thus, the devolution of power to local governments not only opens the possibility of horizontal conflicts but also

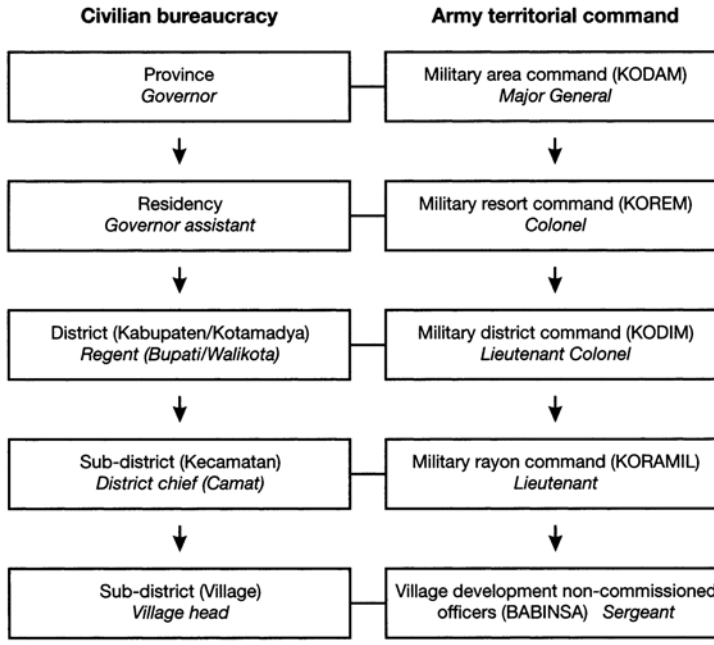

Figure 5.1 Parallel structure of civilian bureaucracy and army territorial command.

vertical ones, namely, the conflict between the local and the central governments.

Although the process of national integration has been in progress since the 1940s, or even much earlier than that, the military claims that it only took place after 1958, namely, after General A.H.Nasution proposed his 'Middle Way' concept. Employing this concept, later popularly known as *dwi-fungsi*—'dual functions' (the civil and the military)—the military establishment ABRI *(Angkatan Bersenjata Republic Indonesia)* developed a doctrine, the so-called HANKAMRATA (*Pertahanan Rakyat Semesta,* Total War). With the implementation of this doctrine, seventeen military territorial commands were established.[3] This not only made the military organization parallel to the civilian bureaucracy (Fig. 5.1) but also enabled its officers to control the socio-political activities of the populace. The military officers deemed that they had special rights to determine who, which organizations and which activities, were considered a threat to the political stability of the country. Their deep control over society became stronger particularly after Babinsa (*Bintara Pembina Desa,* village development non-commissioned officers) was established during the New Order government.

In the view of the military, the parallelism of its organizational structure with the civilian bureaucracy guarantees national integration since it is capable of

identifying early activities that would be dangerous to the political stability of the republic. Such a view can be considered part of the military officers' arrogance in their belief that there are no intelligent people outside the military. 'Civilians are very slow in making decisions, too many needless debates (would take place) while the situation worsened'.[4] In the military officers' view, Indonesia could not exist without them, since there are no other groups in society that are as committed to the safety of the nation and that are as capable of eradicating rebellions such as the 1948 Communist Party Rebellion, PRRI/Permesta, DII/TII, and G30S/PKI of 1965.[5]

The military mindset, as shown by many studies (Muna 2000; Rinakit 2003), is in fact still persistent despite the end of the New Order regime. TapMPR Number VI/MPR/2000 and Number VII/MPR/2000 that divided security issues in the nation between the police—with authority over internal security—and the military —with responsibility over matters of defence—by and large did not change the military's self-perception. Indeed decentralization in the military view is no more than a process that threatens national integration and, therefore, for the military, decentralization contradicts its role as a body that is concerned with nation-building and national integration.[6]

Besides, the military officers tend to believe that decentralization will not bring a better life for the people since it tends to make them inward-looking and encourages them to adopt a narrow spirit of localism. A case in point is the refusal of the Central Javanese regional government and its parliament to accept raw sugar from other regions. Another case is the imposition of high taxes by the Lampung regional government on products from outside their province. Such examples of parochialism are counterproductive to national development. In the military's eyes, such situations are seen as fertile ground for emerging conflicts among the regions. This becomes more serious when the decentralization of finance not only makes it easier for each party to buy arms, but also allows the creation of new 'kings' at the district levels.

The decentralization of social violence

Studying military officers' perception of decentralization, it seems that their view is highly influenced by the command system. This means that their mindset is centralistic in nature and anything contrary to this is considered a threat. From a political culture perspective, the military's attitude parallels the attitude of the *satria* in traditional Javanese kingdoms (Onghokham 1985). In other words, Javanese values influence the inner world of the military (Britton 1996). As noted by Anderson (1990), the idea of power in Javanese culture is symbolized by a lamp. The more centralistic the power, the brighter the lamp. Decentralization therefore is against the idea of power in Javanese culture since it dims the lamp. Furthermore, employing Suryadinata's analysis (1992, 1998), which includes the military as part of the *priyayi* (besides the civilian bureaucrat) and as a proponent of *Pancasila,* decentralization is seen by them as a threat

since it gives opportunity for political Islam to move freely, even to the extent of demanding the implementation of Shariah law. According to the military's 'threat doctrine', which was developed in the middle years of 1980s, anything against *Pancasila* (for example, fundamentalist Islam and communism or the so-called right and left extremes respectively) is to be crushed.[7]

However, if we look carefully, it can be argued that the military's disagreement with decentralization policy as discussed above is, in fact, only a way of hiding

Table 5.1 The number of governors and mayors (bupati/walikota) and their background

Province	*Governor*	*Number of municipalities*	*Number of military mayors*
DKI Jakarta	Military	5	1
West Java	Military	28	9
Central Java	Military	35	17
Jogyakarta	Civilian	6	2
East Java	Military	37	19
North Sumatra	Military	19	6
Central Kalimantan	Civilian	6	2
Aceh	Civilian	13	2
South Sumatra	Military	10	5
Riau	Military	8	2
East Kalimantan	Military	7	3
Central Sulawesi	Military	5	2
Irian Jaya (Papua)	Military	14	4
South Sulawesi	Military	24	4
Lampung	Civilian	9	3
West Kalimantan	Military	8	3
West Sumatra	Military	14	7
Bali	Civilian	9	4
Maluku	Civilian	6	3
East Nusa Tenggara	Civilian	13	5
South Kalimantan	Civilian	11	5
West Nusa Tenggara	Civilian	7	3
Jambi	Civilian	6	2
Southeast Sulawesi	Civilian	5	2
Bengkulu	Military	4	2
North Sulawesi	Military	7	2
Bangka-Belitung	Military	4	1
Riau Islands	Military	4	2
Banten	Civilian	5	1

Province	*Governor*	*Number of municipalities*	*Number of military mayors*
North Maluku	Civilian	4	2
Gorontalo	Civilian	4	1
31 provinces	Military (17)	337	126

Table 5.2 The relationships between the provincial budget and the governors' background

Province budget (p.a.)	*Military governor*	*Civilian governor*
Rp. 500 billion–2.5 trillion (US$50–250 million)	4 Provinces (Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java)	
Rp. 100 billion–250 billion (US$10–25 million)	9 Provinces (North Sumatra, Riau, East Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi, Irian Jaya, South Sulawesi, West Kalimantan, West Sumatra, North Sulawesi	6 Provinces (Central Kalimantan, Aceh, Lampung, Bali, Maluku, Yogyakarta)
Rp.<100 billion (<US$10 million)	2 Provinces (Bengkulu, South Sumatra)	5 Provinces (East Nusa Tenggara, West N.Tenggara, South Kalimantan, Southeast Sulawesi, Jambi)

Source: Data Gubernur dan Bupati, Depdagri, 1999.

other real agendas. The first hidden agenda relates to the military's concern about the attitude of local parliaments (DPRD) and NGO activists who oppose military officers becoming governors or mayors. Since the reform movement and the end of the New Order, the percentage of officers who have held the gubernatorial and mayoral positions has been slowly decreasing. Data from 2001 shows that out of 31 provinces and 337 municipalities, the number of military governors and mayors is 17 (54.83 per cent) and 123 (36.49 per cent) respectively (see Table 5.1). These are slightly lower proportionately compared to the data of 1999 when out of 26 provinces and 316 municipalities, 15 (57.69 per cent) and 116 (36.70 per cent) of the similar positions were occupied by military officers.

The second item relates to the military's concern about the continuation of their economic interests. There are many high-ranking officers and retired generals who feel that their interests would be threatened by the prospects of decentralization. Given the implementation of extensive regional autonomy and the laws about the central-regional fiscal budget, the local parliament will have the power to terminate business agreements that only benefit the companies supported by the military. These companies operate in the fishery, forestry and mining sectors. Such actions by the parliaments, of course, will cause a loss for

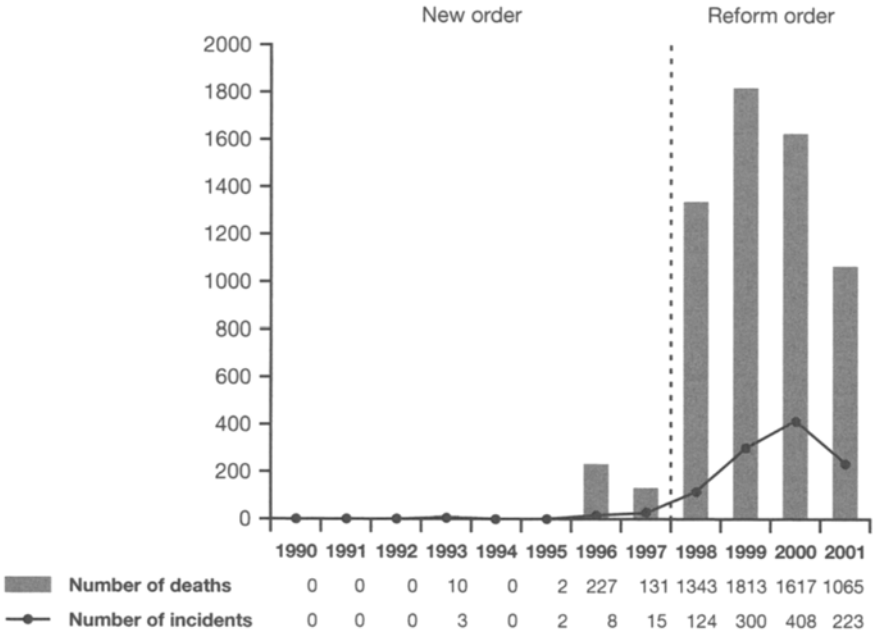

Figure 5.2 Social violence, 1990–2001.

the military. This loss will be higher if their chances of holding civilian positions in the regional governments are limited. Military officers, for instance, usually are governors of the richest provinces with budgets exceeding 250 billion Rupiah (US$ 25 million) per annum (see Table 5.2). In contrast, military officers tend to avoid poor provinces.

The last item relates to the military's concern over the democratic activists' demand to abolish KORAMIL, KODIM, and KOREM when regional autonomy is fully implemented. This relates to Regulation Number VI/2000 that gave the authority to the police to handle internal security affairs. Given this decree, the existence of the military structural organizations at the district levels, their 'tip of the lance' (key) to controlling society, will no longer be relevant. To maintain the safety of the people, each local government will utilize the police, not the military.

It seems that regional autonomy has indeed become a threat for the military. How then do they protect their own existence and their interests in economic and political affairs? According to Aditjondro (2002), the answer is simple; namely, the military will create violence in order to hamper the implementation of decentralization. Given what they perceive as the threat of decentralization, the military is justified to defend, even to re-establish, its territorial organizational structures. The social violence in Aceh and Maluku, for instance, justified their re-establishment of Iskandarmuda and Pattimura military territorial commands

(KODAMs) respectively. These KODAMs together with the other five, namely, 17 Agustus (West Sumatra), Lambung Mangkurat (South Kalimantan), Tambun Bungai (Central Kalimantan), Merdeka (North and South Sulawesi) and Cendrawasih (Papua) had been closed down by General Benny Moerdani when he was Commander in Chief in 1985.

Studying social violence in Indonesia, it seems that it has drastically increased since the breakdown of the New Order regime (Fig. 5.2). Serious conflicts (medium and high conflicts) took place in areas such as Maluku, Aceh, Central Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi and Papua, which are led by civilian governors (Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Classification of conflict areas, 1999–2001

Province	*Number of incidents*		*Number of deaths*		*Category of social violence*
	Total	*with minimum 1 death*	*Total*	*per 100,000 population*	
High conflict area					
Maluku	165	138	1,949	93.4	Communal
Aceh	464	341	1,238	32.2	Separatist
Central Kalimantan	16	13	440	27.0	Communal
Medium conflict area					
Central Sulawesi	15	10	334	17.2	Communal
Jakarta	55	16	1,230	13.5	Communal
West Kalimantan	17	9	442	12.2	Communal
Papua	41	29	136	7.0	Separatist
South Kalimantan	1	1	124	4.3	Communal
East Nusa Tenggara	14	8	55	1.5	Communal
Riau	17	4	26	0.7	Communal
West Nusa Tenggara	12	6	24	0.7	Communal
Low conflict area					
Bali	9	5	14	0.5	Communal
North Sulawesi	3	1	9	0.3	Communal
South Sulawesi	14	3	20	0.3	Communal
West Java	88	28	71	0.2	Communal
Lampung	20	5	11	0.2	—

Province	*Number of incidents*		*Number of deaths*		*Category of social violence*
	Total	*with minimum 1 death*	*Total*	*per 100,000 population*	
Central Java	52	17	42	0.1	Communal
North Sumatra	24	7	11	0.1	Communal
East Java	32	10	29	0.1	Communal
Yogyakarta	9	2	2	0.1	—
West Sumatra	6	1	1	0.0	—
Jambi	7				—
South Sumatra	7				—
East Kalimantan	4				—
Southeast Sulawesi	1				—
Bengkulu					—
Total	1,093	654	6,208	3.2	

Source: Centre for Political Studies (database)

Table 5.4 Social violence, by province and by category, 1990–2001

Province	*Category of social violence*							
	Communal violence		*Separatist violence*		*State—community violence*		*Industrial relations-related violence*	
	Number of incidents	*Number of deaths*	*Number of incidents*	*Number of deaths*	*Number of incidents*	*Number of deaths*	*Number of incidents*	*Number of deaths*
Aceh			464	1,238				
North Sumatra	14	5			4	3	6	3
West Sumatra	4	1					2	
Riau	11	25			2		4	1
Jambi	4				1		2	
South Sumatra	3				1		3	
Bengkulu								
Lampung	6	4			8	4	6	3
Jakarta	33	1,209			22	21		

Province	*Category of social violence*							
	Communal violence		*Separatist violence*		*State—community violence*		*Industrial relations-related violence*	
	Number of incidents	*Number of deaths*	*Number of incidents*	*Number of deaths*	*Number of incidents*	*Number of deaths*	*Number of incidents*	*Number of deaths*
West Java	68	62			13	9	7	
Central Java	44	38			7	4	1	
Yogyakarta	6	1			3	1		
East Java	22	22			9	6	1	1
Bali	8	14					1	
West Nusa Tenggara	9	21			2	3	1	
East Nusa Tenggara	13	53				1	2	
West Kalimantan	13	440				2	2	2
Central Kalimantan	16	440						
South Kalimantan	1	124						
East Kalimantan						3		1
North Sulawesi	3	9						
Central Sulawesi	13	334				2		
South Sulawesi	9	20				4		1
Southeast Sulawesi						1		
Maluku	164	1,949				1		
Papua	1		38	132		2	4	
Total	465	4,771	502	1,370		88	59	38	8

Source: Centre for Political Studies, Soegeng Sarjadi Syndicated (database)

In contrast, the areas which are run by military governors, such as Bali, North Sumatra and West Java, have had low incidences of violent conflict. By observing the categories of conflicts, this study shows that separatist violence took place in Aceh and Papua, both resource-rich provinces. Meanwhile, serious

communal violence broke out in Maluku, Central Kalimantan, Jakarta and South Kalimantan, among others (Table 5.4).

As mentioned earlier, serious conflicts (medium and high) took place in areas that were governed by civilian governors; in contrast, low numbers of conflicts happened in areas where the military held the gubernatorial position. This can be explained in at least two ways. Firstly, the conflicts were created by the military in order to show people that without the military's presence the political situation would become uncontrollable. Therefore, the greater the civilian government's efforts to implement decentralization, the greater the military's resistance. Following this line of argument, it can be estimated that once the military's socio-political interests are disturbed social violence could spread to the whole country. It can therefore be suggested that the conflicts that took place in the districts that were led by the military might have been contrived. They were created by the military in order to avoid public accusations that the military were behind the violence. In short, the military used the shadow conflict as evidence to argue that it was absurd to say that the military created problems since conflict also took place in regions where the military held the reins of control.

Secondly, it could be argued that conflicts took place in areas led by the military because the people there are still in a reformist euphoria, and oppose the governor and military operators because they still behave in the New Order way. They are not only arrogant but also intervene and intimidate civilians. Consequently, conflicts in military-led areas also cannot be avoided. Such situations have also degenerated because of the loss of military control over the paramilitary. As studied by Meitzner (2002), both religious and political parties' paramilitary organizations were in partnership with the military during the New Order, if not in fact their tools. But, now, they are in competition with the military, and have become bold in competing with the military and the police in offering protection rackets to private businessmen. Their entry into these arenas has meant less profit for the military and police. As a result, the possibility of conflict taking place between these various parties is high.

It seems that after the Bali Bombing on 12 October 2002, however, communal conflict is unlikely to happen again because this could strengthen the suspicion that the military is behind the communal riots. With the Bali explosion, the military does not need to create violence in order to prevent its interests from being threatened by the decentralization policy. The Bali blast has validated the military view that national integrity will be threatened if decentralization is applied too extensively, resulting in the spread of radical Islam in the regions and demands for the application of Shariah law. As suggested earlier, from the beginning, the military has tended to suspect radical movements (of both the left and the right extremes). The way the military has tried to tackle these emergent movements is by strengthening their efforts to rebuild the territorial structure of the New Order. Within that territorial structure, the military cannot only expand the reach of its economic and socio-political interests, but also claim itself as the *bayangkari negara* (the defender of the nation).

Concluding remarks

Given the military's reluctance to let go of their still considerable power, this chapter has suggested that it is nearly impossible for there to be full implementation of a decentralization policy in Indonesia. The increasing difficulty of its implementation is due to several reasons, but, it is suggested here, there are two main reasons: the attitude of civilian politicians and the quality of the military officers' corps. First, almost all the civilian politicians are dependent on military support to defend their political positions and promote their political interest. For example, in the coming 2004 election, the incumbent President Megawati has instructed her party branches to support military candidates for the various positions of governor, mayor and regent. This shows how beholden she is to the military for her continuing political survival. Other examples to note are the positive commentaries on the military by Amien Rais and Hamzah Haz, even though there have been military operations against *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (the Free Aceh Movement) in Aceh. It is evident that military power, whether that found in their organizational strength, their intelligence networks or their business capital, has become a critical factor in the calculations of ambitious politicians.

Second, there will be difficulty implementing the decentralization policy because of the declining quality of the military officer corps. Studying the academic background of the younger generation officers of the military, it appears that most of them were only average students when they were in senior high school. Their academic records were only 6.5 on average (*Markas Komando AKABRI* 1996). In contrast, cadets of the earlier years in the military academy had average academic records of 8. This means that the academic quality of the military, by and large, has declined from year to year. Given such a situation, it seems possible that they will become more aggressive in the future. Their lack of intellectual abilities could make them less open minded and also pave the way for greater aggression. Since decentralization policy will further undermine their own military interests, it is expected they will try to hinder the decentralization process. Hence, it is suggested that the military will oppose anyone who tries to push this policy through.

Notes

1 This section is based on discussions with 10 military officers (army) in Jakarta and Bandung during March 2002. They are two lieutenant colonels, four colonels, one brigadier general, one major general and two lieutenant generals.
2 For comparison, see Simbolon (1999).
3 These military territorial commands were: (1) Kodam I/Iskandarmuda (Aceh), (2) Kodam II/ Bukit Barisan (North Sumatra), (3) Kodam III/17 Agustus (West Sumatra), (4) Kodam IV/ Sriwijaya (South Sumatra and Jambi), (5) Kodam V/Jaya (Jakarta), (6) Kodam VI/Siliwangi (West Java), (7) Kodam VII/Diponegoro

(Central Java), (8) Kodam VIII/Brawijaya (East Java), (9) Kodam IX/Mulawarman (East Kalimantan), (10) Kodam X/Lambung (South Kalimantan), (11) Kodam XI/ Tambun Bungai (Central Kalimantan), (12) Kodam XII/Tanjungpura (West Kalimantan), (13) Kodam XIII/Merdeka (North and South Sulawesi), (14) Kodam XIV/ Hasanuddin (South Sulawesi and North-east Sulawesi), (15) Kodam XV/Pattimura (Moluccas), (16) Kodam XVI/Udayana (Nusatenggara), and (17) Kodam XVII/Cendrawasih (Irian Jaya). See, Bachtiar (1988:31).

4 This is a quote from an interview with former President Suharto (Jakarta, 19 June 1999).

5 The 1948 Communist Party rebellion also known as the 'Madiun Affairs' happened in Madiun, East Java, in 1948, the PRRI/Permesta *(Pemerintahan Revolusi Republik Indonesia/ Pemberotakan Semesta Alam)* rebellion occurred in two places, West Sumatra and South Sulawesi in the 1950s, the DII/TII *(Darul Islam Indonesia/Tentara Islam Indonesia)* rebellion occurred in West Java in the early 1960s and the G30S/PKI *(Gerakan 30 September/Partai Komunis Indonesia)* rebellion happened in September 1965 in Jakarta.

6 For more details on the military's perception of their role, see, for instance, Maynard (1976).

7 For more details on the Indonesian military's threat theory, see Honna (1999).

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6
The reshaping of the Indonesian archipelago after 50 years of regional imbalance

Muriel Charras

Ever since the regional government bill of 1974 on decentralization and local autonomy at the *kabupaten* (district or regency) level, the discussion has been that local governments lacked the 'capacities' and 'capabilities' to implement decentralization.[1] The central government had used this argument to legitimize its heavy hand on the regions via the provincial governors—men appointed by, representing and belonging to the central government in Jakarta. 'Deconcentration' had been mainly introduced at the provincial level; nothing had been done to enhance the capacities of the district governments, and still nothing had been done to adjust the basic concept of decentralization within the Indonesian context.

Things changed radically in 1999 when two laws on regional autonomy were passed, less than one year after Suharto's downfall and just months before the first 'free' election since before the New Order. Indonesia, which had become in 35 years one of the most centralized states in the world, has in a very short time turned into one of the most decentralized ones. While the debates have focused on 'local' or 'regional' autonomy, we find hardly any vision or regulations articulating 'local' areas working together to create large 'regions', geographical units that would be useful in integrating the territory of this huge archipelago nation.

In this chapter, I shall focus only on the situation in 'outer Indonesia'—that is parts of Indonesia outside Java. I will first give some background to the legacy left by the Suharto New Order in this large part of the country (93 per cent of the land area) in order to understand the magnitude of the changes introduced by the new laws on regional autonomy. Because of the recentness of the process of local autonomy and the tremendous difficulties of its implementation, I will look only tentatively at the meaning of creating new regencies or districts *(kabupaten),* a process which has multiplied since the beginning of the autonomy process. Facing what most of the time is interpreted as a 'chaos phase', I will track all the signs of the new reshaping of the archipelago, leading to more positive thinking about a necessary 'deconstruction', and then a 'reconstruction' phase.

I have been aware of regional developments in outer Indonesia since the beginning of my career as a geographer in Indonesia in 1975, a year after the

first decentralization law and at the beginning of the 'Development Era'. My first research concerned transmigration and spontaneous rural settlement, a national programme which was supposed to, among other objectives, boost development in the receiving provinces. My main interest then shifted to regional development (mainly in Sulawesi, Kalimantan and Sumatra) with an emphasis on agricultural evolution, the expansion of land use, the emergence of towns and the role and impacts of the central policies toward the regions, all within the context of an historical perspective. In other words, I was trying to understand how many areas in outer Indonesia became shadows of themselves, unable to play on their own heritage. Putting all these experiences together I was able to write a paper in 1993 showing that 'outer Indonesia was left without any prospects' and that without the implementation of proper development policies, national integration was endangered.[2] Clearly, to me, the hyper-centralization that had developed in Indonesia was the wrong path for both economic and national cultural development.

Since the winds of autonomy have been blowing over Indonesia, I have been following the developments, not with new fieldwork (except for short missions in Kalimantan-West and Central- and South Sumatra on other topics) but through the proliferation of recent expert publications, press releases and academic studies.

The New Order legacy in outer Indonesia

It is important to understand the situation in which the outer regions found themselves at the onset of the autonomy process. Not only does that help to explain how certain attitudes are reactions to the excesses of the past, but it also explains the importance of the changes and the need to devote sufficient time to the correction and transformation process, assuming, of course, that the consequences of the past are not irreversible.

Beyond local differences, there are some elements that are relevant to the whole of the outer islands region. Since the 1960s, Jakarta has acted as a colonizer of these outer regions. The main characteristics of this colonization have been: the imposition of a unique administrative model by centre-based administrators; a top-down developmental approach; and a policy of economic extraction to benefit the development of the central region, that is Java. This has been possible mainly through denying cultural differences in favour of the culture of the centre-promoted to the rank of national culture—and by removing, little by little, all of the power of local traditional institutions.

There were several key periods in this process. First, there was the period of dividing the territory into provinces and districts, from 1950 to 1964, based on the Javanese administrative model inherited from the Dutch. Then there was the promulgation of the so-called village law (no. 5/1979) which inaugurated the period of what I would call 'cultural obliteration', a period which spanned the 1980s. Finally, the 1990s period was marked by the excesses of economic

liberalization, a false liberation since it was controlled by a clique linked to the central government, and led to the Indonesian crisis which left devastation in its wake, notably in the outer regions.

The village law imposed the standard Javanese village structure on villages throughout the country. All had to be named *desa* (or *dusun* as part of the village or hamlet), with a minimum of 250 families, and had to be associated to a delimited territory. These two basic elements, people and land, did not fit most of the villages in outer Indonesia. This is because population density generally is not comparable to that of Java, because of the plentiful land in the outer regions; thus the *desa* and *dusun* did not need the kind of delimitation found in Java. A village of 250 families is a small village in Java but might be a little rural town in outer Indonesia.[3] The village governance system became the same everywhere in Indonesia, and was fully integrated into the national bureaucratic structure. Like any other social and economic organization, it had to be organized by the state and bureaucratized through the government party, Golkar. This included any village cooperatives or *koperasi unit desa* (KUD), and any supposed local leaders *(tokoh masyarakat);* even the customary councils *(dewan adat)* had to follow the same regulations, and most of the time these functions were not fulfilled by the *adat* specialists. This impeded any local initiative and brought about the destruction of the social fabric.[4]

Even though Indonesia was rich in the diversity of village customary laws, there were some general trends and similarities that could be found in the different traditional local governance systems. The person in charge was either hereditarily trained or chosen for his charisma, his knowledge and his wisdom. Often he was not alone but accompanied by a council of elders. He was the one who, among other things, managed the land use system and relations between members, penalized improper behaviour and managed relations outside the village with neighbouring counterparts. Everything was done so that problems were resolved within the village community, in order to avoid the intervention of the external superior authority (territorial administration, police or judiciary). With the village law of 1979, the head of the village had to be a candidate recognized by the hierarchical bureaucracy, and he was responsible only to it; in order to become village head he had to have an imposed level of modern education. If a problem arose in the village or with neighbouring villages, he was supposed to solve it hierarchically—that is call the police and leave the procedure in the hands of the court. In other words, for the past 20 years, it was no longer customary laws which were supposed to regulate village life, but instead the state political bureaucracy.

At the time the law was applied there was no real reaction among villagers and local leaders.[5] That was the case in South Sumatra with the abolition of the *marga* (a federation of villages[6]), bringing to a brutal end the function of the head of the *marga* structure, the *pasirah,* in 1983. At that time academics and provincial intellectuals held seminars in reaction to the law, but the protest failed to spread at the local level.[7] This apathy was not because of a general consensus

about these transformations, but most likely a feeling of powerlessness in the face of a central authority whose discourse was the necessity of 'development' *(pembangunan),* and which set as binary oppositions modernity versus backwardness, and unity versus diversity. To protest against these changes was tantamount to associating oneself with 'backwardness' and 'regionalism', a threat to national unity. Today everyone in the outer islands has recognized the extremely important consequences of the village law no. 5/1979, something still difficult to understand by the Jakartanese or by researchers focusing on Java.

In the 1960s a series of agrarian and forest laws were passed in order to start large-scale exploitation in the name of 'national development', but customary lands, still recognized by law, were still a problem in the field.[8] With the 1979 village law, which abolished the authority of the customary guardian, the last block was swept away, giving free access to village lands and paving the way for investors. For the population in the outer islands, traditional land rights were less and less respected, a feature which accelerated dramatically in the early 1990s with the liberalization of the Indonesian economy. In many rural areas village land, fallow land for shifting agriculture *(ladang),* rubber jungles,[9] and even orchards around settlements were all included in large zones classified as 'production and conversion forest' and given to logging concessions, large estates or rezoned as industrial forest (HTI, *hutan tanaman industri*).[10]

Tensions in the rural outer islands rose dramatically with the ruthlessness of the land grabbing and the hopelessness of resistance. In 1990, during my fieldwork in the highlands of Palembang, Sumatra, I noticed that villagers became nervous after the second flight of an army helicopter over their settlement. The fear was that they were looking for 'free land' for investors: 'If that is the case we will just have to leave our village for the city', people said. Resentment increased against the centre and all its allies or associates—that is Jakartanese and Chinese entrepreneurs—as well as workers brought in to open the forest and work the land.[11]

This organized depletion of resources was not compensated for by any agricultural programme to help the local population face the drastic reduction of land availability, one of the main components of the *ladang* system. This system had greatly adapted and changed, at least since the beginning of the last century, with the spontaneous incorporation (without a national subsidies programme) of useful trees (fruit, rubber, teak etc.) planted in between the forest regrowth on the fallowed land. But official land use and land-planning maps never recognized this type of productive forest in their land classifications. Slash and burn practices *(ladang berpindah pindah)* were declared the primary cause of forest degradation (and more recently of forest fires) and a symbol of backwardness, in opposition to the highly civilized irrigated rice cultivation.[12]

Another trend of the New Order era was the weakness of productive investments in outer Indonesia, which generated a strong regional economic imbalance. Even rubber, rattan, coconut, and so on, are mainly processed on Java, not in the production areas. No incentives to set up industries outside Java

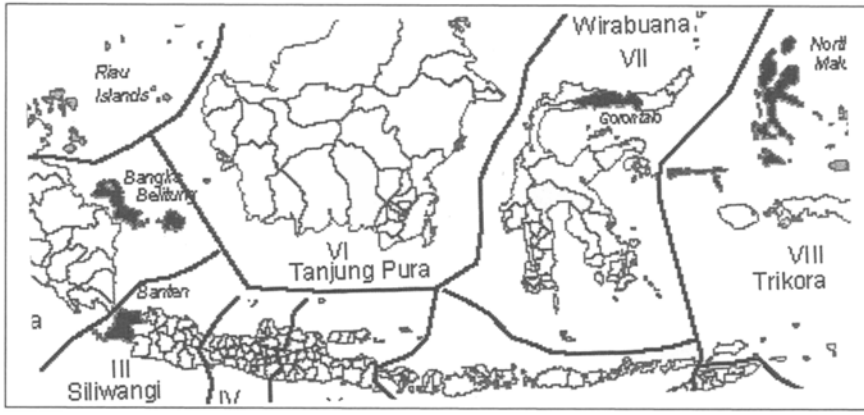
were given during these years. No tax relief, no improvements in infrastructure for access and installation (energy supplies and services), no facilities for direct import and export procedures were introduced to take advantage of the resources of certain regions (for example the availability of space, raw materials—including energy—proximity to Singapore or Malaysia etc.), or to make up for the disadvantages of more expensive labour on Java.

The consequences were that the outer provinces lacked 'modern' employment opportunities, initiating a drain of regional resources (both human and capital) to Jakarta and West Java. A lack of entrepreneurship was often cited as an explanation for the snags to developing the outer provinces; in fact entrepreneurs did and do exist, but the more dynamic ones have already left their regions to set up activities in the main urban centres in Java.[13] The same can be said for other qualified works and the industrial workforces, since the explosion of manufacturing industries in the 1990s concentrated in Java (and Batam).[14] At the same time the best civil servants looked to Jakarta to further their own careers.

Therefore, the migration system was characterized by two opposing trends. On the one hand there was a stream of out-migration from Java directed mainly to the outer rural areas. This brought poverty to the outer islands through state organized settlement and transmigration. Spontaneous migration, on the other hand, brought into the most active rural areas a legion of little artisans (petty trade, home food industry, brick and tile factories etc.), and agricultural manpower for harvest time (paddy, coffee, cloves etc.) or to extend the plantation areas (Charras and Pain 1993). Most of these migrants, either the transmigrants or the spontaneous migrants, were among the poorest and the least educated from the overpopulated islands. On the other hand, there was a spontaneous stream of in-migration to Javanese cities, which brought the best human capital and economic wealth from the outer islands into Java.

Indeed, it is difficult to accept the recurring rhetoric about the low level of human resources (SDM, *sumber daya manusia*) in outer Indonesia. This rhetoric is not completely free of pejorative judgement about the aptitude of the outer island populations. In fact those who had left to find better high schools, or better jobs, were all educated in their places of origin until the end of secondary school.[15] SDM levels will improve only when the outer regions are able to keep their best people by offering them employment that fits their competence and aspirations.

Another important element in understanding the difficulties of the present situation is that, during the past three decades of the New Order, local initiatives were insignificant. It is well known that, during the Suharto era, top-down management was dominant. Even local administrations were not able to put forward proposals adapted to their areas, since they did not have the proper information about their own territorial unit, such crucial data as regional GDP, or data pertaining to forest and timber (that is the area of each concession, the length and nature of the contract, the number of employees etc.). Local initiatives were squeezed, as for example was a well-organized spontaneous cooperative among Balinese migrants. Their system of accounting and sale to the National



Map 6.1 Indonesian *kabupaten* division in 1996, military regions (KODAMs) and new provinces in 2004.

Rice Agency was favourable to farmers because they by-passed corrupt middlemen. However, the government wanted to transform their cooperative into an official village one, managed by a civil servant. The Balinese association refused to do this, and chose to close down after two years (five harvests), instead.

During the Suharto era regions became heavily dependent on the centre for both routine and development funds. In outer Indonesia the head of the sectoral agencies *(Kanwil),* among them the regional planning agencies *(Bappeda),* and most senior posts were often held by Javanese. 'Officials were dependent on higher levels of government for appointment and promotion. They were part of the huge network dominated by Jakarta. Many had built up an extremely lucrative patron-age' (Booth 2001:11).

Another impediment in the current situation is that the New Order left a nonintegrated national space. Provinces had been created to divide the national territory without any effort to develop linkages between them. Instead, each province was connected individually and exclusively to Jakarta. To go by plane from Pontianak to Palangkaraya, two neighbouring provincial capitals of Kalimantan, one had to first go through Jakarta. Development of each province had been planned in the framework of a territorial unit with its centre—the provincial capital —and the land that fell within its borders. Planning was never done with the idea of looking beyond provincial boundaries. This led to a fragmented space,[16] easier to dominate, but preventing any larger regional dynamics. The only institution territorially well organized into larger regions for the sake of efficiency is the Army, where at the top of the territorial structure there is the 'military regional command' —KODAM. In outer Indonesia, KODAM territories encompass more than one province (for example, the Northern

Sumatra region, Bukit Barisan KODAM, is a combination of Aceh, North Sumatra, Riau and West Sumatra provinces, see Map 6.1).[17]

Indonesia joined the group of 'newly industrializing countries' (World Bank classification) in 1993, but it must be stressed that this industrialization process was to be found mainly in Java (and Batam).[18] By the same time, the outer regions remained exporters of natural resources, and their agricultural products were often subjected to burdensome regulations and restrictions (as with cloves from Maluku and Sulawesi, tangerines from West Kalimantan, and livestock from West Nusa Tenggara).

The discussion above should throw some light on the magnitude of the shift in policy and the problems that will be involved in the implementation of regional autonomy in outer Indonesia. Although people are being allowed to manage their own 'houses', they have to make up for 30 years of lost time in development or mal-development. The outer regions missed the opportunity to develop when Indonesia had the means to do it—during the oil boom which began in 1973– when the government had huge resources to undertake large investments in infrastructure. The infrastructure built during that period in Java allowed those areas to receive private industrial investments later on, beginning in 1986. Today the challenge, during a long economic and political crisis, is to change the whole system that focused everything toward the centre.

The still-nascent regional autonomy period

An analysis of the process of regional autonomy in Indonesia is complex because it takes place during the so-called *reformasi* era. While the new laws add to a generally confused political and administrative situation, one must be careful not to blame them for all of Indonesia's problems. Just as political reform was inevitable and necessary, decentralization was urgent and necessary in order to correct regional, economic and cultural imbalances, which themselves were contributing elements to the crisis.

We are also at the beginning of the process where autonomy and the freedom to organize are still relatively new and uncertain concepts in the minds of many. I will now focus on the background of the law, which gives autonomy to the *kabupaten,* and try to shed light on the powerful tendency to split the territory into ever more administrative divisions *(pemekaran)*.

Kabupaten, *the masterpiece of the process*

The first division in the province, the *kabupaten*—the regency or district—and the town *(kota)* have been taken as the basic administrative units for regional autonomy in Indonesia since law no. 5/1974. During this entire period, however, initiatives emanating from the capital have only resulted in a sort of 'deconcentration', which has been done at the level of the province. Autonomy was re-launched in 1992 (PP 45/1992) by the following 'district autonomy pilot

programme' implemented in 1995 in 26 *kabupaten,* one in each province, which was supposed to test the feasibility of the law. By 1997, Widodo Yusuf from the Ministry of Home Affairs wrote: 'Based on the experience so far, the Government of Indonesia is actually reconsidering its decentralization strategy and has delayed the extension of the programme to other districts'.[19]

It is abundantly clear on the basis of these experiences that if regional autonomy was to be implemented at the level of the district, in order to be closer to the population (actually, the main aim of the reform), it would have to be carried out under the coordination of the province. This is not only due to the large size of the country, which presupposes relays between the centre and the small autonomous units, but is also a product of the development model used for over 40 years. Indeed, since independence, all the efforts expended in creating the provinces were organized through and dominated by the capital. While the management was, as we have seen, controlled by Jakarta, the creation of the province also forced people to artificially construct a new identity, out of a mixture of items from different ethnic cultures. This can be seen in the architecture of administrative buildings, in the provincial folklore, and so on (Sellato 1990). All these efforts to create a province, as a unit of development and as a cultural entity, have been in vain. The 20 years of decentralization experimentation did not lead to a conceptual change in the regional autonomy law, as the province level is now left tame and powerless.

The choice of *kabupaten* as the unit for decentralization without provincial coordination was expressly made by former Jakartanese elites as a means of averting tendencies toward separatism,[20] federalism,[21] or even perhaps so that the process would come to naught[22] and force a return of power to the centre later on. The 'centre' was always aware of—if not obsessed with—the danger of a powerful province, since most provincial capitals are historical, political and economic centres. It is in that context that President Habibie hurriedly passed the law before the first free election.

Today, the *kabupaten* constitutes the basic cell for territorial organization without legitimate control from the former organizing body. Not only have they become units of essential administrative relations but they are also the area where human exchanges have to be integrated by common cultural identity. It is the *kabupaten* that has taken charge of the main management functions: the execution of economic activities and policies, and the elaboration of social policies. This is because the regency is considered the most capable of reflecting local aspirations and converting them into workable realities.

The creation of new kabupaten

Since the beginning of regional autonomy implementation, we have observed the multiplication of new units of autonomy, that is either new *kota* or *kabupaten*. In 1996, Indonesia had 26 provinces and 293 second-level units, or *kabupaten* (not including East Timor), while by June 2003 there were 30 provinces and 393

second-level units, if we take into account only the new units accepted by both the central government and the region (thus without the partitioning of Papua). Province creation will be discussed later on; for the moment I will focus only on the creation of the 73 new *kabupaten* since the beginning of the crisis.[23]

Under the Dutch and until the end of their administration, the territorial units changed repeatedly all over the archipelago, either in the native states or in areas under direct rule; amalgamation followed division and vice versa. 'The system produced a constant struggle between bureaucratic pressures for consistency and continuity, and political and economic pressures for change and diversity' (Cribb 2000:124). By the middle of the 1960s province and *kabupaten* divisions were settled with a clear choice for administrative uniformity, based on population density as the main criterion for partition. Smaller *kabupaten* are found in populated parts of Bali, Java and, for example, in the southwestern part of South Sulawesi. Those areas enjoy a quite elaborate territorial administration. On the other hand, size and distance factors did not take logistical layout into account, and *kabupaten* in outer provinces are often huge areas impossible to manage properly. Up until 1996, only three new *kabupaten* were created, all of them in

Table 6.1 Evolution of the average size of kabupaten (regency) per island, 1996–2003

	Average kabupaten *area, km²*		*New* kabupaten	
	1996	*2003 (June)*	*1996–2000*	*2000–2003*
Bali	695	695	0	0
Java	1,605	1,585	0	1
NTT/NTB	3,781	3,241	1	2
Sulawesi	5,673	3,621	4	9
Sumatra	8,768	5,637	19	11
Maluku	14,901	7,451	2	4
Kalimantan	22,478	13,158	6	11
Papua	46,887	35,165	3	0
Indonesia	8,171	6,222	35	38

Lampung. The main receiving province for agricultural settlers installed by the government, or coming spontaneously (mainly from Java), Lampung became the most densely populated province in outer Indonesia in 1990, reaching 200 people per km² by 2000.

The difference in the average size of *kabupaten* between islands is huge (Table 6.1).[24] A *kabupaten* like Kutai (East Kalimantan) represented, before its partition in 1999, three quarters of the total land area of the island of Java, which itself is organized into four provinces and 82 *kabupaten*. If we consider the population factor, the result will show the same contrast, but inverted. The strong imbalance of population distribution is one of the geographical dilemmas of the archipelago, but since independence it has not properly been addressed in the

development of the outer provinces. The consequences are important. To try to realize the difficulties of managing a large area, we should imagine the organization of life if the island of Bali were one *kabupaten,* which is the present average size of a Sumatran *kabupaten*. The people of Bali's north coast would have to travel to Denpasar to benefit from *kabupaten* services to do with agriculture, education, and so on. In addition, none of the *kabupaten* in Sumatra are as well equipped as Bali is with roads, nor do any have the same number of civil servants with official means of transportation (cars, motorbikes). Most of the time the calculation for the level of infrastructure in a province is done per head of population (that is, one hospital for every 10,000 people), so that the results can appear balanced. However, if this calculation is based on area (hospitals per km^2), a huge discrepancy appears, with often one hospital covering more than 500 km^2 of an area with few roads. This means, among other things, that real access to social infrastructure is still very low in many of the outer provinces.

Today the new guiding concept is to be closer to the people. Even if a clear standard for distance to the *kabupaten* centre has not yet been calculated, the size of the *kabupaten* is among the criteria for the creation of a new unit. Therefore, the administrative reshaping of large areas, and the growth in the number of civil servants and the amounts of functional budgets are unavoidable.[25] All the new *kabupaten,* except one, have been created outside of Java. In the progress of reshaping administrative territories one can observe that there have been two periods: the first, at the beginning of the crisis and before the application of the laws on autonomy, when it was mainly a central government decision; and the second period, following the application of the law in 2001, when the reshaping began to be shared by the former *kabupaten,* with the approval of the province and then the central government.

Half of the new *kabupaten* were created during the first wave. Those partitions were not simply the product of the regional autonomy process, as we have seen in the Lampung case. The announcement of the law has accelerated the implementation of many proposed partitions already studied and prepared by the outer provinces since the 1980s, but always postponed by the central agencies because it was not among their priorities.

There are the cases of the re-arrangement of archipelago areas, groups of little islands, where specific constraints in maritime communication were well known. Maluku became two provinces in 1999 with two new *kabupaten;* Mentawai became a *kabupaten* in West Sumatra; the offshore islands of Banggai in Central Sulawesi also. The many islands of Riau, already under one *kabupaten,* needed a new grouping because of the great distance to some of them (like Natuna). There is also the only case *of kabupaten* creation in Java, in the capital city: Pulau Seribu (The Thousand Islands).

The partition of extensive areas has been in preparation for some time. The project to divide Irian Jaya/Papua into three provinces and to reshape the size of the *kabupaten* has been a demand of the provincial planning agency since the

1980s, for the sake of development. When finally the central government proposed partition of the province in 1999, it was too late, because of the announcement granting special autonomy status to Papua. It was, and still is, interpreted by the local leaders as a ploy by the central government to dilute autonomist or separatist sentiments.[26] With the same law that created the provinces, provisions for three new *kabupaten* have been accepted for Papua.

Other examples of partition concern large *kabupaten* that have often received large numbers of agricultural settlers since the 1970s: Luwu (Sulawesi Selatan), Bengkayang (out of Sambas), Landak (out of Pontianak) in West Kalimantan, Jambi province and so on. The huge *kabupaten* of Kutai in East Kalimantan, a gas and petrol resource area, has been divided now into five *kabupaten,* with none of them isolating a resource-rich area.

Most of the new *kabupaten* created during this first period are justifiable on the basis of their size, geographical setting and demographic characteristics. But in a few cases we can detect manipulation and the hand of New Order remnants intent on securing and isolating rich areas like Batam (a small island and industrial estate that became a town) in the Riau islands,[27] and the rush to create the new *kabupaten* Mimika around the huge gold mines of Freeport in Papua. The resource-rich provinces, like Riau and East Kalimantan, were very quick to anticipate the implementation of the autonomy law due to the strong animosity toward the greedy centre, and the partition movement was led by local aristocrats.

The second wave of creation is more complicated because it is the result of many different local situations and demands. The new political elites were already in place and profiting from new opportunities. Data such as size and boundaries of the latest creations are not yet available for evaluation, but Table 6.1 shows no tendency to over-fracture the outer islands or group of islands. The average size of *kabupaten* is still very large today, and that means that partition will continue.

I will take three examples using the imperfect knowledge we now have to demonstrate the different practices being adopted. Most of the creations follow the same trend as the first wave, that is, the partition of large *kabupaten* with the aim of promoting better management. Former Kotawaringin Timur *kabupaten* was the largest in Central Kalimantan (50,700 km^2), covering the entire hydrological basin of the Mentaya River. If formally this partition served to articulate the upstream and downstream areas, in fact, it left the upstream very isolated and far away from its capital, Sampit. If we take the upstream situation: transportation facilities are very limited, most of the villages have neither electricity nor telephones, it takes hours by speedboat to get to Sampit, plantations are still limited, and the main resources are forest—and not for much longer because deforestation is continuing unabated.

Now the basin is divided into three parts: the ulu/upstream, the middlestream and the *ilir*/downstream, each of which is one specific geographic entity, which very often coincides with cultural entities: the Dayak are dominant upstream, in

the *ulu/udik* area, while Dayak Muslims and newcomers dominate the middle- and downstream/ilir areas. The new *kabupaten* are still huge but are more manageable. Populations will be closer to the new administrative centres, planning may better address the area specificities, and they will be able to organize themselves according to their own rules. For this *ulu* area, becoming autonomous is a chance to reorganize itself and not to be considered by the more developed *ilir* as just a reserve of natural resources, open to exploitation in the absence of any real development plan.[28]

The second partition of Luwu in South Sulawesi is another case. The new Luwu Utara *kabupaten* was still very large (14,000 km^2), so the further partition into East Luwu, that included the nickel mines of Malili, made sense for administrative efficiency. But the ultimate objective of this reshaping was to be able to apply for the formation of a new province in Sulawesi, including either the former Luwu Kingdom in its narrow limits (comprised of the three *kabupaten* Luwu) or Luwu Raya (Greater Luwu), which would encompass Toraja (to the west) and Kolaka (to the east) as it had at an in an earlier stage of its history. The later idea, however, has been dropped after consultation with the Toraja who, it turns out, had other plans.[29]

The third example is taken from South Sumatra in the *kabupaten* Musi Banyuasin, the largest in the province (26,000 km^2). The geographic setting is dominated by two contrasted agro-ecological areas: a large coastal strip of tidal swamp which gives access to Palembang by sea, and a peneplain inland crossed by the Musi River, just upstream west of Palembang. After the election of the new *bupati* (coming from the major centre of the peneplain, Sekayu), the dark horse losing candidate took the second centre, Pangkalan Balai, at the margin of the swampy area, and will introduce the demand for a new *kabupaten* there, where he hopes this time to win the *bupati* position. This demand is reasonable in regards to the size of the area, but plans for the new division should have taken more account of technical matters.[30]

Political motives have often tended to be an important factor in the second wave of *kabupaten* partition, and this will not stop until the 2004 elections. Political parties, at the local and central levels, have everything to gain by an increase in the number of electoral districts. The result is that elite interests start to drive the decision-making process. Left by the wayside are the priorities of meeting the objective preconditions of a region and achieving local efficiency.[31]

Also in the background of the call for partition is the reference to the former *afdeeling* or *onderafdeeling* divisions under the Dutch colonial government. In outer Indonesia this division was mostly a response to the need to use local leaders for indirect rule because, among other things, the Dutch colonial government did not have enough sufficiently high-level Dutch administrators to ensure that the population would follow the basic administrative transformations that the colonial power introduced.[32] Because these divisions were often in line with ethnic divisions, academics are critical of what they considered to be a 'romantic' return to tradition.[33] Although aware of the dangers of 'localism', this

return should be understood as a reaction to the New Order excesses and we should remind ourselves that tradition is not immutable but flexible, particularly in Southeast Asia which has a long history of borrowing from the outside.

The village communities have not emerged unscathed from the 20 years of steamrollered, imposed national homogeneity; but they did not live isolated from either global changes or recent Indonesian social and political transformations. Most probably we will find new *adat* communities that will incorporate 'modern' values such as democracy, gender equality, and so on. This is now an interesting and topical field of research in Indonesia.[34] In the outer provinces, most local leaders I met agreed that customary law has to be recovered in order to restore social control, which has been lost through the bureaucratization of social functions. They are all aware of the involvement of the younger generation who have never known *adat* rules, but they hope that it will be the duty of the elders to give adequate guidance to the system.[35]

To conclude this part, I would like to stress that the partition into more manageable units in outer Indonesia is a necessity, taking into account the geographical and cultural setting of the archipelago and the size of the former *kabupaten*. This should have already been done under the 1974 law, while the economic growth rates were strong. Decentralizing will inevitably increase the annual support for *kabupaten* (DAU or *dana alokasi umum,* public allocation funds coming from the central government) and the number of civil servants. To interrupt the process in the face of these kinds of difficulties is exactly what the New Order did in postponing decentralization.

Perspectives for a new regional organization

If Indonesia is going through a *passage obligé* of fragmentation in the development of its peripheries, the country should not avoid organizing its territory into larger units if the goal is to improve national economic and cultural integration. Between the local and national levels is the regional level, and decentralization should go along with a regionalization process.

Since the beginning of my research in Indonesia in 1973, I have been trying to understand how such a large archipelagic nation could have no large regions. In this case the 'region concept' may be bigger than a province because it should include its neighbours.[36] Before the beginning of European colonization, Nusantara was made up of large regions, bounded by the sea and, thanks to exchange networks, based on many centres linked by economic and kinship contracts. It was a poly-nucleus space and not strongly hierarchical; the main centre never lasted for long because of the constant shift of power, due mainly to changes in the world market demand. It was a very dynamic space, open and adaptable to world change. Europeans disturbed this traditional economic power by bordering the space, but the process of Indonesian regionalization really broke up in the 1950s. The strong constraints represented by centrifugal forces of the still lively regions, the will to close the national territory for security reasons and

to combat rampant smuggling (Mackie 1980), and the strong hyper-centralization determination of Suharto, are all pertinent factors in this loss of regionalism.[37]

Instead of promoting large dynamic regions open to the outside world, the New Order put all its efforts into hindering relations between provinces, and into creating the strictly controlled provincial level which now is left without any clear function under the regional autonomy laws. For the moment, the weight of decision making in planning is still at the central and provincial levels but, because they are central representatives, the staff keep a low profile and their agencies are disorganized. We do not see any move, any vision, from institutions to promote planning at a level higher than *kabupaten*.[38] Some former programmes are still officially under way but are mainly worthless because of misconceptions. They need to be reassessed from the local point of view.[39]

In the midst of the fragmentation process under way today, it is important to look out for any signs pointing to an inverse tendency, like the amalgamation of *kabupaten* or provinces, or cooperation in border areas.

The creation of new provinces

At a time when regional autonomy is being given to the *kabupaten,* the demand for the creation of new provinces is a bit odd. Perhaps it is done in anticipation of a possible adjustment of the law that will restore certain powers to the province. Nevertheless, it can be interpreted as a determination to create a real common interest between *kabupaten*. Up until June 2003, three new provinces have been created: Banten, Gorontalo and Bangka-Belitung (Babel).[40] They have been formed essentially to correct a peripheral location in their respective provinces of origin; a situation which often, in the Bantenese context, has meant that the inhabitants are of a different socio-cultural background to those in the main areas of the original province.

Banten at the western tip of West Java was left behind in the trend of development centred on the Jakarta-Bandung corridor. Likewise, Bantanese are not Sundanese, with whom they are in historical opposition. Gorontalo was the last North Sulawesi district bordering with Central Sulawesi, far from Manado. Also Gorontalo people are not Minahasan, who dominate the administrative structure in the province. Babel follows the same pattern, because Palembang looks more inland for its development. But here a clear cultural difference is missing, it is more a societal opposition. Banten and Babel had already formulated the claim for a separate unit when the provinces were being created in the 1950s. These three cases also point out that centralism does not exist only in relation to Jakarta.

The process of area integration (between *kabupaten*) may be much more real in the new provinces than in the earlier imposed ones. Bounded by the struggle for a recognized identity, the *kabupaten* involved will most probably work together to create and develop their new entity as a whole and may recognize a kind of provincial authority under the leadership of a chosen governor. We are

approaching here the 'real' political decentralization that should complement administrative autonomy.

The provincial divisions, settled by the beginning of the 1960s, brought into being only three units with a certain level of cultural homogeneity: Central Java, Bali and, in a certain way, West Sumatra—except that the Mentawai archipelago shares nothing with the Minangkabau. All the other provinces have to manage a composite ethnic landscape,[41] and may face calls for partition. For the moment the historical links between coastal areas and their hinterlands are still important, and maintain cohesion in the two large islands of Sumatra and Borneo. Only one claim for new partition (in North Sumatra) is based on a split between inland (Tapanuli) and coast (East Sumatra), and the project is still highly controversial.[42]

The Sulawesi case is quite different and specific, as it is without massive land areas. The island is composed of long, narrow peninsulas divided into four provinces—north, east central, southeast and southwest—leading to a spatial split as if it was made up of many islands. Segments of peninsula, including coast and hinterland situated far from the former provincial capital, claim vigorously that they deserve provincial status. These include the Mandar and the Luwu countries, lying to west and east of the northern edge of South Sulawesi, and the eastern peninsula of Luwuk-Banggai in Central Sulawesi. With each of these three claims, the strategy employed has been first to divide a large *kabupaten* into several smaller units, then to re-unify them into a province, as happened in the Riau archipelago. In the southern part of Eastern Indonesia, which is a patchwork of many ethnic groups, the claim to become a province is more island based, such as in the case of Flores.

Table 6.2 Evolution of the average area of *kabupaten* (regency) per island, 1996–2003

Province	*1996*		*June 2003*	
	Kabupaten	*Average area (km²)*	*Kabupaten*	*Average area (km²)*
Aceh	8	6,924	12	4,616
Sumatra Utara	11	6,435	16	4,424
Sumatra Barat	8	6,222	9	5,531
Riau	5	18,912	12	7,880
Jambi	5	8,960	9	4,978
Sumatra Selatan	8	12,961	7	14,813
Babel			5	n.a.
Bengkulu	3	7,056	6	3,528
Lampung	6	5,551	8	4,163
JKT (Kab.P.Seribu)			1	n.a.
Banten			4	n.a.
Jawa Barat	20	2,315	16	2,894
Jawa Tengah	29	1,180	29	1,180

Province	*1996*		*June 2003*	
	Kabupaten	*Average area (km²)*	*Kabupaten*	*Average area (km²)*
Yogyakarta	4	792	4	792
Jawa Timur	29	1,652	29	1,652
Bali	8	695	8	695
NTB	6	3,363	6	3,363
NTT	12	3,990	15	3,192
Kalimantan Barat	6	24,460	8	18,345
Kalimantan Tengah	5	30,520	13	11,738
Kalimantan Selatan	9	4,184	11	3,424
Kalimantan Timur	4	50,610	9	22,493
Sulawesi Utara	4	4,756	5	3,805
Gorontalo			4	n.a.
Sulawesi Tengah	5	13,945	9	7,747
Sulawesi Selatan	21	3,466	24	3,033
Sulawesi Tenggara	4	6,922	5	5,537
Maluku	4	18,626	4	7,451
Maluku Utara			2	
Irian Jaya	9	46,887	12	35,165
Indonesia	*233*	*8,171*	*306*	*6,222*

Beyond the centre, a new sharing space

In the past two years, projects have surfaced out of local initiatives, and outside any national institutional framework. Even if some of them are still at the idea stage and maybe difficult to realize because of the economic crisis, they are truly important for the future of the archipelago. These local initiatives, taken beyond Jakarta, evidence inclusive vision and a trend that complements the 'exclusiveness' of the autonomous units for particular spheres of activities. They are to be found at all levels of territorial organization, save the national, which still must be healed from the wounds of centralism.

Inter-*kabupaten* cooperation has been emphasized in the case of province creation. In East Kalimantan three *kabupaten* and a port town decided to join efforts in order to save the mangroves and organize the conservation of the whole Gulf of Balikapapan.[43]

Cooperation between provinces can be best illustrated by the West Sumatra case, which wants to re-direct its development via the east coast of Sumatra as it was in historical times,[44] pushed by the present economic vitality of the Malacca Strait. Riau and Jambi have a lot to gain from the stream of goods from Minangkabau, all along the roads and up to their ports. The three provinces have agreed to restructure the road system, and a suspension bridge to overcome a

difficult passage through the mountains is under discussion; the cost will be shared among them and, it is hoped, also by the centre.[45]

Working together in the framework of one large island has already started. During the New Order the governors of one, or part of one, island held an annual meeting under the patronage of Jakarta, in order to listen to its plan. In 2000, the four, later five, provinces of Sulawesi created a Regional Cooperation Body for Sulawesi Development *(Badan Kerjasama Pembangunan Regional Sulawesi)* headed by the governor of the young province of Gorontalo. They hoped to harmonize the plantation sectors and agro-industries, to develop 'Sulawesi Incorporated' in order to develop such products as 'Sulawesi Coffee' or a cacao brand name.[46] Most recently they were able to oppose, with one voice, the centre's plan to merge the ports of Makassar and Surabaya.

The best example of this type of handiwork is Sumatra. It has created a private enterprise, the association of 'Sumatra Heritage', which started as a North Sumatran initiative in the 1990s and has now become 'a Pan-Sumatra network for heritage conservation' (PanSumNet), with, as a first step, the inventorization and the conservation of the traditional houses.[47] Since 2000, the provinces of the island have founded the Forum of Cooperation for the Development of Sumatra, which evolved into quite an elaborate form under an 'Agenda Sumatra 2001–2005'. They have shared the work of doing feasibility studies among those who choose to participate in pan-Sumatran projects. The feasibility study for a Sumatran airline is under the leadership of South Sumatra, while that for a Sumatran shipping line is under Jambi; studies for infrastructural improvements and the centre of promotion is under Riau, while a study for a data network is under the North. In June 2001, working all together, they also claimed from Jakarta a share of at least 20 per cent of the benefits/profits from state enterprises such as plantations, forest concessions and ports. They have also asked to be the recipient of the reforestation grant, instead of it being paid to those who received the concessions, who usually misused it.

A high priority for the provinces of Sumatra is the interconnection of electricity and the land transportation network. Recently they presented their project for a trans-Sumatran railway (5,000 km—including the 1,300 km built under the Dutch) to Jakarta, which has been agreed to, and have approached China for a counter-trade agreement.[48] On 21 May 2003, all the governors of Sumatra inaugurated the building of the Sumatra Promotion Centre in Batam. An important move will be to address the underdevelopment and isolation of the western part of the island, from north to south, with at least a better east-west road connection.[49]

In the face of a dynamic pan-Sumatran organization, the initiatives from Kalimantan pale. But first of all, it is a very large island and is less populated and integrated than Sumatra; the land mass is still broken and organized along large river basins, and the Trans-Kalimantan road, which is supposed to link these parts, is still in poor condition or unfinished. Second, between 1999 and 2001, the peace of two provinces was disrupted by severe violence against Madurese

migrants. For the moment, the pan-Dayak or pan-Malay movements are more vigorous than the call for a 'Kalimantan culture'. Even though everybody recognizes general poverty and a lack of proper development in Eastern Indonesia (KIT or *Kawasan Indonesia Timur*), I did not come across any local initiative to organise the region at this level. It is true that for the moment the area is not properly defined, either as a whole or regarding its different components.[50]

New initiatives engaging Indonesian border areas with neighbouring states are now flourishing, mainly between the two banks of the Malacca Strait, and between Sarawak and West Kalimantan. Relations around the Sulu and Sulawesi seas, once promising, are temporarily immobilized due to insecurity. During the New Order, Jakarta was reluctant to open border gates, either at the Sarawak border (Entikong, Sanggau), or on the east coast of Sumatra. Now roads are under construction on each side to create a gate for each *kabupaten* (Sambas and Benkayang in West Kalimantan), breaking its long isolation as a dead-end *kabupaten*. A shipping route is being launched between Pekanbaru and Malacca. Dumai Airport is ready to serve commercial flights. Malaysian investments were already important in the forest and plantation sectors in Kalimantan and Sumatra, as partners of the Jakarta clique; now they are dealing directly with the region and will hopefully be more respectful of the local human and natural environments. Their investments are now much more diversified for example in agro-industry; and an oil refinery is under study in Jambi.

All these local initiatives were impossible during the New Order, as everything had to go through or come from Jakarta, an instinctive enemy of autonomy. There are encouraging signs of impending radical changes in the landscape of Indonesia. If we come back to the example of Kotawaringin Timur, its break up into new autonomy units is an unavoidable necessity in locating services at a more decent distance to the people and in organizing development in accordance to the particular geographical and cultural setting. In the near future, all the area components of the Mentaya River Basin will have to work together on specific aspects of development, such as water management, protected areas, transport and exchanges, river and ocean ports, and so on, as other places have already begun to do. The area embracing a river basin is a suitable demonstration of the necessary solidarity between parts of a territory. Then we should be able to understand that for larger areas—either a group of *kabupaten,* provinces, islands or groups of islands—sharing space in cooperation is just as important as sharing an international airport or a port of call, a university, and so on, until ultimately sharing the national capital.

My opinion is that Indonesia has to decentralize and give more autonomy to the regions for political, socio-cultural and economic reasons. Decentralization is a world trend that Indonesia cannot escape, even if it is a tremendous change. We should not blame the local government for the difficulties but the former central government which left outer Indonesia with all the diseases of a former colony,

and left Indonesia with an unprepared and immature political class, both in Jakarta and in the regions.

We should be reminded that decentralization is a long, complex and difficult process. In France, traditionally a highly centralized administration, the process started only at the end of the 1970s and the country is still adapting the autonomy process step-by-step. Regional autonomy will ensure the diversity of Indonesia (culturally and geographically), a diversity that was not taken into account during the New Order. A new understanding of territorial solidarity will ensure the unity of the nation.

Notes

1 See papers in *Far Eastern Economic Review,* 'Debating regional autonomy', 17 June 1974:16, and 'Jakarta's idea of autonomy', 9 August 1974:32.
2 This article in French (1993) was translated for a Symposium in Jakarta and edited by PMB/LIPI (2001).
3 This minimum number of families was then dropped because it was impossible to reach. To have an overview of village diversity see Koentjaraningrat (ed.), *Villages in Indonesia,* Cornell, 1967.
4 See Antlöv (2000) for a discussion of village bureaucratization
5 See Kato (1989) for Jambi, and Charras and Pain (1993) for the South Sumatra case. Bali always got more attention and Dutch publications on imposed changes are numerous.
6 Subsequently called *dusun,* with little hamlets called *kampung* or *talang*.
7 *Marga* land was broken into many village territories. The villages' subsidies grew dramatically from 194 *marga* to 2,238 villages, and this advantage concealed all the other negative consequences.
8 On this subject, see Tjondronegoro (1991) and Padoch and Peluso (1996).
9 A forest regrowth with planted rubber and fruit trees equivalent to a secondary forest in terms of structure.
10 Which in fact allowed the complete clearing of the forest before replanting one or two species for the pulp industry (paper and textile).
11 I have felt the growing anti-centre, anti-Javanese sentiment since 1986. Even the high-level civil servants were aware of this evolution. I have seen my host families in Sulawesi reacting violently to the national television channel (the only one at that time), and turning off the television when the series or cultural programmes were too 'Javanese'.
12 See Geertz (1963), Dove (1985), Gouyon *et al.* (1993), and Gouyon (1999).
13 Touwen (2001) chapter IV: 'Asian dynamics' gives an interesting interpretation of the regional activities in outer Indonesia between 1900 and 1940.
14 Fieldwork in South Sumatra in 1993 and 1995 showed a drain of young girls and boys from remote villages and transmigration areas. Fully packed buses drove them directly to the Tanggerang industrial area. Since the crises, those who did not get married in Java have returned, idle and desperate.
15 To overcome the distance problem, schoolchildren were sent to the district or provincial capitals starting from the secondary level.

16 Most studies on national and regional space presented 'clusters' defined by economic performances (such as 'resource rich' or 'isolated', see Hill 1989). This gave a patchwork landscape of the archipelago and obliterated the possible regional dynamics. An interesting clustering regional analysis is done for the first half of the twentieth century in Touwen, 2001:45.
17 There have been changes in the past two years in the number of KODAMs. This map refers to the older divisions. Please refer to Sukardi Rinakit (this volume), footnote 3, for the names and locations of the new KODAMs.
18 This process did not start with the New Order. It was already embryonic since colonization but the last and the strongest wave of centralization came from the past 30 years. See Booth (1998) and Dick *et al.* (2002).
19 See his and Beier's report at http://www.fao.org/SD/RODirect/ROfo0007.htm.
20 The three real threats of separatism have occurred at the provincial level: East Timor, Aceh and Papua.
21 A rather good concept for the Indonesian archipelago, but unworkable today with some 400 autonomous units.
22 Personal communication from a former governor who assisted in the internal discussions during the Habibie government.
23 The creation of new towns *(kota)* follows a different problematic relating to urbanization and urban management.
24 Data was taken from the list of the statistical census on population (1971 to 2000); agriculture (1993) or economy (1996). Then, for more recent data I took first the actual list of the district head, *bupati,* at the Ministry of Home Affairs (Depdagri), the DAU list for 2003, and the law passed to create new autonomous units in the Legislature (DPR-MPR) (updated 12 June 2003). Pulau Seribu did not appear anywhere, so missing data is always possible.
25 Recently the State Minister for Administrative Reforms pointed out that civil servants numbered only 550,000 in the eastern part of Indonesia, whereas on Java they numbered some 2.4 million.
26 It is not clear whether the boundaries of the new proposal are the same as those of the 1980s. Even if many possibilities exist, the last choice is an aberration which ignores the basic geographical constraints for feasible regional planning: namely, the very high east-west mountain range which splits the main land mass into northern and southern parts. To add insult to injury, the new division would not link the rich Minika *kabupaten* to the development of the southern part of Papua.
27 It so happens that there had been calls in Batam to form a province even before becoming a new town. See also *Business Times* (Singapore), 23 March 1999, 'Batam, Bintan to get leeway for own strategies'.
28 McCarthy (2001), studied a similar situation in the same province, *kabupaten* Kapuas.
29 Information obtained from Melina Nathan who is doing research for ICG (International Crisis Group) on Luwu village conflicts (forthcoming report).
30 The division will divide the peneplain part from the tidal swamp area, a marginal area where the poorest population lives; many of them are transmigrants. The richer area of the peneplain would keep all the gas and oil fields and the main plantation area. An east-west partition would have ensured better balance and also would have secured future sea access to the peneplain part.

31 The basic report of this last example, from South Sumatra, shows that it was not handled by a technical team, either at the regional level, or in Jakarta, where the decisions are supposed to be made. The report had many statistical and analysis errors, no maps and many other problems.

32 The divisions were often changed for bigger or smaller units, sometimes racially suppressing them, and re-establishing them because of the chaotic situation. For a good example of the changing pattern during the Dutch era, see the PhD thesis of Mestika Zed (1991:39–44), which illustrates the problems that occurred because of rapid territorial expansion in the Palembang hinterland after the abolition of the Sultanate in 1825.

33 Most academics in Jakarta are dedicated pluralists, both in terms of ethnicity and in terms of religion. But also they have been trained with the idea that ethnicity has disappeared from the cultural landscape of 'modern' Indonesia.

34 Take the example of the attempt to invigorate and adapt the former traditional federation of villages in Minangkabau country, Toba Samosir and South Sumatra. The two first are more successful for the moment, likely because they have benefited from expatriate experiment and advice. South Sumatra is still debating within the province whether or not to opt for the restitution of the *marga,* trapped and unable to decide between losing the New Order advantages (mainly the power of village heads), and the advantage of the former *marga* village federation for better management of the area and its population.

35 These observations are from fieldwork in Kalimantan, West and central in March to April 2002, and South Sumatra, 2002–2003.

36 If we take as an example the northern part of Sumatra (including Aceh, North and West Sumatra, and Riau), the area is organized mainly by Medan/Belawan, but Riau shares a lot with Jambi, which belongs to the southern part of Sumatra, organized by Palembang. The west coast of Northern Sumatra is dependent on the east coast but also shares a dynamic with the southern part of the west coast organized by Padang.

37 There are very few geographical works on Indonesian regionalization. The main authors whose ideas coincide with my geographical approach are Christine Drake and historians like Oliver Wolters, Jane Wisseman Christie, John Legge and George Kahin.

38 In April 2003, the Department of Settlement and Infrastructure did hold a seminar on 'Island Spatial Organisation', which failed to address the main points: integrated development at this level and the specific role of the sea in the management of the national archipelago.

39 Such as KAPET, *Kawasan Pengembangan Ekonomi Terpadu,* 'Areas of Integrated Economic Development', which combined some *kabupaten* in each province of East Indonesia, or KESR— *Kawasan Kerjasama Ekonomi Sub-regional* or 'Sub-regional Areas of Economic Cooperation' (in a transnational context). The transnational organizations (Sijori, BIMP and IMT zones) did not work properly because Jakarta was anxious about losing control. An enlargement of the areas on the Indonesian side was decided upon—including provinces which had little to share (for example, West and East Kalimantan) and excluding workable associations like West Kalimantan and Singapore—making the programme impracticable (Charras and Franck 2000; forthcoming).

40 The partition of Maluku does not belong to the autonomy process as it was planned and organized long before.
41 It was on cultural grounds that Bali finally became a province distinct from the Southeastern Archipelago, and Central Kalimantan was separated from the Banjarese dominated South Kalimantan.
42 North Sumatra, the receiving province of a huge in-migration stream at end of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, is an intricate case because of ethnic and social components, and because of the economic disparities between the eastern and western parts. 'Mengukur urgensi pemekaran propinsi Sumatra Utara', *Kompas,* May 2002.
43 'Pengelolaan Teluk Balikpapan Bisa Jadi Contoh', *Kompas,* June 2003.
44 Before European intervention, this area looked mainly toward the eastern slope of the Barisan range, either for trading or as an area for new settlement, extending even on to the other side of the strait, into the Malaysian peninsula. The Dutch, and then after independence the central government of Indonesia, forced those in that part of the country to look west, either to develop the west coast opening to the Indian Ocean, or to contain the active Minang in their place. See Colombijn (1994).
45 'Sumbar buka urat nadi ekonomi ke Riau', *Kompas,* January 2003.
46 'Percepat Pembangunan Sulawesi dengan Sinergi Antardaerah', *Kompas,* May 2003.
47 This is mainly organized by architects who are fighting to catch the attention of the *kabupaten* for funding, with few results so far.
48 'Indonesia Dekati Cina, Bangun Jaringan Kereta Api Trans-Sumatera', *Kompas,* May 2003. The icing on the cake (for a regional planner) is that Banten, the westernmost province on Java, wishes to be part of the project.
49 'Pelabuan Pantai Barat Sumatra Ditinggalkan Pantai Timur', *Kompas,* November 2002.
50 KIT often includes Kalimantan and Sulawesi, which is wrong in my view. The geographical setting of the three parts—Maluku, Papua and the southeastern part of the archipelago (NTB and NTT)—are extremely different and development should be addressed according to the individual needs of each area.

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Part II

Conflicts over culture, identity and power

7
Otonomi daerah in Bali
The call for special autonomy status in the name of *Kebalian*

Michel Picard

> Although *otonomi daerah* is the slogan of the day, and a fair sharing of locally produced wealth between Jakarta and the region is being negotiated, more is at stake than a distribution of money and power. People in Indonesia's provinces are reassessing their relations to the wider world: not only their immediate surroundings and the directives from Jakarta are changing, but also their ideas of belonging, their orientations and their range of action.
>
> Sutherland and Locher-Scholten (2002:36)

On 27 September 1999, the *Jakarta Post* ran an article titled 'Bali wants special status', opening with the following statement: 'Community leaders have urged the province's newly elected regional representatives to the People's Consultative Assembly to seek special status for the province be granted'. The main reason for the demand was said to be financial, because Bali faced a problem with its provincial budget. It earned little from natural resources, which could be claimed in a profit-sharing arrangement with the central government. Most of Bali's income was derived from its tourism industry, specifically from hotel and restaurant taxes which are levied not by the province but by the districts and municipalities. The larger share of the revenue from tourism was siphoned off, either to Jakarta or to foreign investors.

The distribution of revenue generated by the tourism industry in Bali is indeed an important issue, and I shall come back to it in due course. But it is far from being the whole story, as something both more pervasive and more ambiguous is at stake, namely Balinese identity. As an anthropologist, what I intend to do in this chapter is to place the problems raised by the implementation of regional autonomy in Bali within a wider frame, that is the cultural politics of Balinese identity construction as an ethnic and religious minority within the Indonesian state.

I shall proceed in three stages. First, I shall delineate the situation in Bali, focusing particularly on the development of tourism, before proceeding to specify the reactions provoked on the island by the law on regional autonomy.

Then, I shall trace the dialogic construction of a Balinese identity since the incorporation of the island into the Dutch colonial empire at the turn of the twentieth century. And finally, I shall come back to some of the problems brought about by the implementation of regional autonomy in Bali.

Tourism development and its discontents in the late New Order

Perhaps more than any other ethnic group in Indonesia, the Balinese people appear particularly prone to asserting their identity and especially successful in establishing the worth of their culture. To a large extent, this success is due to the vigorous promotion of Balinese culture as a tourist attraction. Yet in the late 1960s, when the Indonesian government decided to make the island of Bali the focus of tourism development, the prospect of intrusive tourists in their midst initially caused tangible fear among the Balinese. They were understandably worried that their culture might not withstand the 'challenge' of tourism. To deal with this challenge, the Balinese authorities devised a policy of 'cultural tourism' *(pariwisata budaya),* which was intended to develop tourism without debasing Balinese culture, by using culture to attract tourists while fostering culture through the revenue generated by tourism.

Despite fears that Bali would become 'de-cultured' under the impact of mass tourism, however, what happened is more ambiguous. With the benefit of hindsight, it appears that the very decision to promote 'cultural' tourism has rendered the Balinese self-conscious about a thing they possess called their culture. It is as though, thanks to tourism, the Balinese have discovered that they 'have a culture' —something that is at once precious and perishable, which they ought to preserve as well as promote. As it was made valuable and enhanced by the tourist gaze, their culture became reified and externalized in the eyes of the Balinese, and turned into an object that could be detached from themselves in order to be displayed, performed and marketed for others (Picard 1996).

Yet, as it was being manipulated and appropriated by the tourism industry, their culture became not only a source of profit and pride, but also a cause of anxiety for the Balinese, who were wondering whether they were still authentically Balinese. Thus, for the Balinese, the touristic focus on culture provoked an overriding concern about identity—about what they term their 'Balineseness' *(Kebalian)*. Called upon to conform to their image, the Balinese not only are required to be Balinese but, furthermore, they must be worthy representatives of *Kebalian*: they must become signs of themselves. All their attempts at the affirmation of their identity are but a reaction to this imperative from which they are unable to extricate themselves.

The issue of identity has become pervasive in Bali since the early 1990s, when the development of tourism on the island shifted to high gear, with a sharp increase in visitor arrivals, followed by an even more rapid rise in hotel investment and other tourism related facilities.[1] With the activities it has

generated, such as handicrafts and other cottage industries, tourism has boosted the economic growth of Bali, providing two-thirds of the gross domestic regional product in the late 1990s. It is estimated to contribute more than 50 per cent to the income of the Balinese, while directly absorbing about 40 per cent of the working force in Bali, a figure likely to reach 75 per cent if one includes its indirect spin-off effect. Notwithstanding the uneven distribution of economic benefits within the population and throughout the island, the per capita income has moved from below the national average to one of the highest-ranking provinces.

Meanwhile, the new affluence brought about by the tourism industry was fuelling the rise of a Balinese middle class. Despite the tight control exerted by the New Order regime over any expression of dissent and its forced depoliticization of society, and also despite a very mediocre education system, hardly conducive to the voicing of critical personal opinions, and with a press conditioned to tread a narrow path between self-censorship and official rebuke, one witnessed the emergence on the island of something akin to a public opinion (Bagus 1999). At the same time, the neologism *masyarakat madani* was making its appearance in the discourse of educated Balinese, who were claiming to be the mouthpiece of an incipient Balinese 'civil society'. Even though these public intellectuals—bureaucrats and academics, NGO and student activists, artists and journalists, religious and community leaders—were enjoying some of the fruits of affluence engendered by their participation in the nation-state, they were intent on creating institutional space for themselves, something which implied a decisive break with the centrality of the state in New Order Indonesia. As members of an ethnic and religious minority, they had become critically aware of the plundering of their island's natural and cultural resources in the name of 'development' and 'national interest' (Suasta and Connor 1999).

During that period, debates about the environment flared up with unexpected vehemence in Bali. Throughout the 1990s, a number of controversial tourism 'mega-projects' *(megaproyek)* made the headlines of the *Bali Post,* the main newspaper of the island, and triggered the mobilization of a large cross-section of Balinese public opinion—the Garuda Wisnu Kencana on the Bukit peninsula, the Bali Nirwana Resort at Tanah Lot, the Bali Turtle Island Development on the Serangan island, the Bali Pecatu Graha Resort, and the beach reclamation at Padanggalak, to name but the most infamous ones (Supartha 1998).[2] Environmental issues rapidly became a channel for social and political mobilization against the capital-intensive tourism development decided from Jakarta and operated by foreign interests (Warren 1998). Prominent opinion leaders accused Indonesian and foreign capital of having made a clean sweep of prime real estate at the expense of the Balinese, who were finding themselves progressively becoming foreigners in their own land. They denounced the directives from Jakarta, which too often override provincial regulations, as well as the collusion between corrupt officials and powerful interests.

The fact is that, as a result of inadequate planning and lack of control, the environment of Bali has been heavily taxed, to the point that the island is now rife with air and water pollution, beach erosion and reef destruction, water and electricity shortage, saturation of solid waste disposal, not to mention endless traffic jams on the main thoroughfares. Worse in the eyes of the Balinese is the massive land conversion, which has uprooted the local population, alienated from land owner-ship. Thus, it is commonly claimed that over 1,000 hectares of irrigated rice fields disappear every year, from a total area of 90,000 hectares. This shift in the function of rice fields has important implications for the production of food and the livelihood of farmers, and it poses serious threats to the perpetuation of traditional Balinese culture, which grew out of a communal-agrarian society.

The fall of Suharto in May 1998, by unfreezing the political situation while releasing centrifugal forces in the regions, aroused an intense critical reflection and prompted animated debates among the Balinese intelligentsia. These debates dealt with the development of tourism in Bali, the place of the island within Indonesia and its relations with Jakarta, and more generally with the nature of 'Balineseness' and its prospects in the new era of *reformasi*. Declaring that they no longer accepted being Jakarta's colony (Aditjondro 1995), Balinese opinion leaders claimed for the Balinese the prerogative to further their own views on a tourism policy appropriate for their island and beneficial to its population. The solutions advocated revolve around the need for an adequate planning and control of tourism development, which implies both political will and legal authority from the provincial government to develop tourism in the interest of the Balinese people.

The call for special autonomy status

The Balinese intelligentsia had pinned high hopes on the law on regional autonomy promulgated in May 1999. With the newly acquired autonomy, it was expected that the provincial government would be in a position to control the development of tourism on the island and to appropriate a larger share of its revenue. Unfortunately, it turned out that the new law devolved most of the authority not to provincial but to district *(kabupaten)* and municipal *(kota)* levels.

In fact, seen from Bali, the degree of autonomy accorded to the districts is far from clear, as is the power of the governor to control and to coordinate policies implemented at regional levels. The situation is all the more confused regarding tourism, as it is not even mentioned among the fields falling under the authority of either the regions or the centre. In any case, as soon as the dispositions of the law became known, Balinese opinion leaders started calling for 'special autonomy' *(otonomi khusus)* status, in order to confer autonomy to the province instead of the districts. As a matter of fact, they did so on two separate occasions, first in September 1999, when Balinese regional delegates were

attending the MPR session, and then again after the law on regional autonomy came into effect in January 2001.[3] The arguments they put forward on both occasions to back their claim are twofold: some refer to tourism, others to Bali's specificity.

On the one hand, it is said, Bali is a small island with limited natural resources. As such, it is a geographical unit and should be dealt with in a holistic manner. Yet, as a province, it is divided up into eight districts and one municipality. Only the southern districts of Badung and Gianyar, and the municipality of Denpasar, have an adequate regional income, while the rest are destitute.[4] With autonomy being devolved to the districts, the widely unequal distribution of profits raised from tourism will incite each district to compete in issuing permits for resort development in order to boost their regional revenue. Moreover, each district may impose various taxes and fees on hotels, restaurants and tourists. This will only increase regional imbalances, heighten inter-regional conflicts, and result in the ruining of the environment, as well as creating social and cultural problems.

More interesting for my purpose is the fact that an overwhelming majority of Balinese opinion leaders have been calling for special autonomy status to be granted to the province in the name of Bali's specificity, to whit, its 'Balineseness' *(Kebalian)*—something they construe as the primeval and indivisible unity of 'religion' *(agama),* 'tradition' *(adat),* and 'culture' *(budaya)*. Thus, one continuously reads in the *Bali Post* statements such as these: 'Bali adalah satu kesatuan agama, adat dan budaya…Bila Bali memang sudah menjadi daerah khusus, dengan sendirinya Bali mempunyai hak penuh mengatur daerahnya sendiri. Termasuk dalam menonjolkan Kebaliannya…'.[5] This, they maintain, does not mean that Bali intends to separate itself from the rest of Indonesia. They are not fighting for *Bali Merdeka*. *But, they add, if Aceh has been able to obtain special autonomy on account of Islam, Bali should get it as well on account of the fact that it is an island of Hinduism surrounded by a sea of Islam.*

Now, such a conception of Balinese identity, which is taken for granted amongst Balinese public opinion, far from expressing a primordial essence as they claim, is in fact the outcome of a process of semantic borrowing and conceptual recasting which the Balinese had to make in response to the colonization, the Indonesianization and the touristification of their island. As I have delved extensively into this issue elsewhere (Picard 2000), here I shall outline the dialogic construction of Balineseness by briefly reviewing the circumstances in which the Balinese have engaged in a course of self-identification following the inclusion of their island into a modern state.

The dialogic construction of a Balinese identity

What should be stressed from the outset is the fact that the forced incorporation of Bali into the Dutch colonial empire, completed in 1908, was instrumental in

bringing about the emergence of a sense of religious, ethnic and cultural identity among the Balinese people. This was the result of a deliberate 'traditionalization' of Balinese society, in the guise of a restoration of what was regarded as Balinese traditional order. Whereas the Dutch knew little of the Balinese society, they had certain ideas about what it should be like, and they undertook to make it conform to their preconception. Specifically, by looking for the singularity of Bali in its Hindu heritage, while conceiving of Balinese identity as formed through an opposition to Islam (and Christianity), Dutch academics and administrators established the framework within which the Balinese were going to define themselves (Boon 1977; Vickers 1989; Schulte Nordholt 1994; Robinson 1995).

Despite the Dutch intention to maintain Balinese society in a fixed 'traditional' order, Bali actually underwent rapid and profound changes as a result of increasing interference in native affairs by the colonial state. In particular, the requirements of a modern administration were instrumental in the emergence of a Balinese intelligentsia, since the colonial state needed educated natives to mediate between the local population and their European masters.

In striving to make sense of the changes brought about by the opening up of their world, these educated Balinese viewed themselves as members of a singular entity—the 'Balinese people' *(bangsa Bali)*. Before its incorporation into a colonial state, it is doubtful that the Balinese could have comprehended their island as an integrated totality. Identities were particularistic, in the sense that Balinese identified themselves as members of a village, a descent group, or a temple network, but never simply as 'Balinese'. Collective identities, based on the sharing of similar characteristics and on attachments to unifying symbols, only began to emerge in the colonial period as Balinese sought to construct themselves as different from both their foreign masters and other islanders (Howe 2001).

Thus, in the 1920s, Balinese started describing themselves both as a religious minority—the stronghold of Hinduism threatened by the aggressive expansionism of Islam and Christianity; and as a particular ethnic group characterized by their own customs—which made them at once distinct and comparable to other ethnic groups in the Indies. More precisely, they construed their identity—which they then started calling *Kebalian*—as being based simultaneously on *agama* and on *adat*. The very fact of the Balinese resorting to these foreign terms to define their identity testifies to the conceptual shift occurring on the island after its takeover by an alien power (Picard 1999).

Adat is a word of Arabic origin borrowed by Islamized populations in the Indonesian archipelago to refer to indigenous 'customary law' as opposed to imported 'religious law' *(hukum syariah)*. Introduced to Bali by the Dutch, the word *adat* replaced a varied terminology for variable local customs, which governed the relationships between social groups and infused a sense of communal solidarity in the villages. The incorporation of a miscellaneous assortment of local customs into a generic term altered their meaning for the

Balinese: what had been, until then, an interplay of significant differences deliberately fostered between villages was becoming the locus of Balinese ethnic identity, in the sense of a customary body of inherited regulations and institutions which governed the lives of the Balinese.

As such, in Bali 'tradition' was not clearly distinguished from 'religion'. Indeed, *adat* partakes of the religious world view of the Balinese, in the sense that it refers both to an immutable divine cosmic order and to the social order instituted by their ancestors, at once describing the ideal order and prescribing the behaviour required to achieve that order. Unlike the world religions that have a core of abstract basic tenets and symbols liable to be meaningful to people of diverse cultural backgrounds, Balinese religion is highly localized, as it consists of rites relating specific groups of people to one another, to their ancestors, and to their territory. Moreover, it is a customary obligation, in the sense that participation in its rites is a consequence of membership of a local community as well as of a descent group.

The definition of 'religion' in terms of *agama* was to open a significantly different semantic field. *Agama* is a Sanskrit word, which originally had a double acceptation: first, 'a traditional precept, doctrine, body of precepts, collection of such doctrines', in short 'anything handed down as fixed by tradition' (Gonda 1973:499)—which brings its meaning fairly close to that of *adat;* and, second, a specific religious doctrine associated with the tantric worship of Siva. By the eighteenth century, through its association with Islam, the term *agama* had taken on the meaning of 'religion'. But for the Balinese intelligentsia of the 1920s, the discourse of *agama* bore the imprints not only of Islam but of Christianity as well. By adopting this term, proponents of these faiths had shaped new associations for it, namely an emphasis on a supreme deity, the requirement of conversion to a foreign doctrine whose teachings are contained in a holy book, and an ideal of societal progress. One can surmise, therefore, that by appropriating the word *agama* in their turn, the Balinese intellectuals were attempting to elevate their own religion to an equal standing with these world religions.

While they were busy sorting out what pertains to true 'religion' and what belongs to 'tradition', the Balinese had yet to discover that they also had a 'culture'. The fact is that during the 1920s, culture (and art) as a specific topic had been conspicuously absent from the reflections of the first generation of Balinese intellectuals on their identity. It is only in the 1930s, with the promotion of the island as a tourist destination, and thanks to appreciable help from Dutch orientalists and American anthropologists, that the Balinese added in the category of *budaya* as a component of *Kebalian*. Yet, just as the Balinese language had no term for 'religion' or 'tradition', it also had none for 'culture' or 'art'. Thus, while the word for 'religion' *(agama)* had been borrowed from Sanskrit and that for 'tradition' *(adat)* from Arabic, the notions of 'culture' *(cultuur)* and 'art' *(kunst)* were initially acquired from Dutch, before being appropriated from Malay, as *kebudayaan* and *kesenian* respectively.

Hence, by giving rise to a sharper contrast between 'us' and 'them', the colonial encounter not only helped the Balinese to conceive a notion of themselves as a 'people', a neatly bounded entity, but it also contributed to a further drawing of boundaries between conceptually undifferentiated domains within Balinese society.

After the integration of their island into the newly independent Indonesia, the Balinese were compelled to discriminate further between *agama* and *adat,* so that their religion would be acknowledged as legitimate by the state (Bakker 1993). In the process, Balinese *adat* had to relinquish its former political and religious authority, while some of its outward aspects were singled out for their artistic qualities and thus relocated to the domain of *budaya* (Warren 1993).

In this respect, the New Order state and the tourism industry appear to share a similar conception of 'culture-as-art' (Acciaioli 1985)—*seni budaya*. Inasmuch as Bali is a province of Indonesia as well as a tourist destination, Balinese culture is treated as an asset, and expected as such to contribute both to promoting international tourism in Indonesia and to nurturing the national Indonesian culture. For this to be feasible, however, Balinese culture had first to be divested of its anthropological singularity, in order to become a 'regional culture' *(kebudayaan daerah)* and be commensurable with the other regional cultures of Indonesia as well as with the other tourist destinations with which it competes for the tourists' dollars.

Thus it is that at the close of the New Order, with their *adat* secularized and their *budaya* touristifed, the Balinese have turned *agama Hindu* into an ethnic boundary marker. But it was not long before this link between ethnicity and religion would be disrupted for a double reason: on the one hand, the affiliation of other Indonesian ethnic groups to *agama Hindu* would tend to dissociate it from the Balinese ethnic identity; while on the other, the spread throughout the island of various devotional movements inspired by neo-Hinduism of Indian obedience would bring about a differentiation of the Balinese religious identity.

It would certainly be interesting to pursue this assessment of the fate of *Kebalian* in the era of *reformasi,* but this would take me too far. Suffice to say here that while the Balinese reflection on *budaya* does not seem to have undergone any noticeable shift—other than a novel insistence on the necessity to face up to the *globalisasi* which engulfs their island in the wake of tourism[6]—on the other hand, they are eager to restore their *adat* and assert that the Balinese customary village *(desa pakraman)* must recover its traditional prerogatives, which were unduly appropriated by the state (Surpha 2002).[7] But the demise of the New Order did not only loosen Jakarta's grip on the regions, it also resulted in the politicization of Islam. This threat, which is taken very seriously by the Balinese, has resulted in their placing ever more emphasis on *agama Hindu* as the emblem of *Kebalian,* while the religious landscape of the island is becoming more and more fragmented and even fractured (Howe 2001). The Balinese now display an extreme sensitivity toward anything that might look like an 'insult' *(pelecehan)* to, or even just an encroachment upon,[8] their religious practices and

beliefs—which they devote themselves to defending against repeated accusations of 'paganism' and 'idolatry' by Muslims and Christians alike—and more generally against the anti-progressive and anti-democratic image of *agama Hindu* in Indonesia.

Implementation of the law on regional autonomy in Bali

I shall now return to the situation brought about by the implementation of regional autonomy in Bali.

While up to the end of the New Order things were still reasonably clear, in the sense that Balinese public opinion was usually blaming outsiders and Jakarta for the problems increasingly facing their island, after its downfall cleavages have been on the rise amongst the Balinese themselves. It is as if, now that their identity had been thoroughly established, the unity of the Balinese as a people, a holistic and homogeneous entity, is threatening to break up. Not that Bali had ever been the seamless and harmonious unitary society depicted in the tourist brochures, but now the intra-Balinese conflicts are too conspicuous to be ignored or even to be swept under the carpet by projecting the blame on to outsiders. This being the case, it is significant that articulations of class conflicts within Balinese society do not surface in public discourses, which remain clearly framed in terms of insiders versus outsiders.

To start with, one notices that the implementation of regional autonomy has raised fears of a disintegration of Bali. Opinion leaders in Denpasar are concerned that each *bupati* might turn into a 'little raja', thus going back to the situation when Bali was fragmented between quarrelsome kingdoms, before the Dutch colonial forces put an end to their internecine wars by subjugating the whole island. Their concern echoes a study by Geoffrey Robinson, which attributes the recurrent political conflicts amongst Balinese, and the absence of strong regionalist or ethnic-based movements on the island, to the historical weakness of regional powers encompassing the whole of Bali (Robinson 1995). Several recent incidents testify that these fears might be reasonably well founded.

In order to remedy the imbalance created by the concentration of seaside resorts in the district of Badung—thanks to which Badung has become the second wealthiest district in Indonesia, after Kutai in East Kalimantan—the governor had already required in the 1970s that 30 per cent of hotel and restaurant tax revenues collected by Badung be redistributed to the other districts. For most of these districts, the contribution made by these proceeds is far larger than their own regional revenues (PAD). In March 2001, the Badung regional legislative council (DPRD) proposed to reduce the district' s tax distribution from 30 per cent to only 15 per cent, arguing that Badung would need a substantial amount of money to finance various development projects as a consequence of regional autonomy. In retaliation, legislators from the neighbouring districts of Gianyar and Bangli, where many famous tourist attractions are located, threatened to impose levies on every tourist passing through their territory.[9] For

some time, the governor was able to put an end to the dispute by reminding the protagonists that tourists are attracted in the first place to the island of Bali, not to the district of Badung or, for that matter, to any other district. And from then on, he has been promoting the idea that all tourism-related profits be submitted to the provincial administration, which would then equally distribute them to all districts. But eventually, during a meeting between the governor and all the *bupati,* together with the heads of the regional legislative councils in August 2002, it was agreed that, starting the following year, the provincial government would relinquish its share of hotel and restaurant tax revenues collected by Badung, while the latter contribution would be reduced to 22 per cent and restricted to only six districts, Gianyar and Denpasar being henceforth considered sufficiently well-off.

Another example of the weakness of the provincial authorities is provided by several controversial 'mega-projects' that have been stirring Balinese public opinion lately. One of the most unlikely of them all is the construction of a 150-hectare Formula One racing circuit in the district of Jembrana, in west Bali. Then, it was the turn of the district of Buleleng, in north Bali, to make the headlines with two litigious projects. One is the development of an exclusive resort area named Villa Bukit Berbunga on Lake Tamblingan, and the other is the plan to build a 10km long scenic aerial cable car connecting the coast to the picturesque village of Munduk on the hills bordering the lake. More recently, prominent Balinese business people have been promoting the idea of setting up a casino on the island of Nusa Penida, located in the district of Klungkung, an idea readily taken up by some circles in Tabanan and Karangasem. All these projects have triggered harsh criticism from local environmentalists and community leaders, as well as from the governor and the head of the Tourism Office. But officials in these different districts have completely ignored the objections, on account of the law on regional autonomy, which confers to the districts full authority to carry out development projects.

Besides their concern about disintegration since the collapse of public order following the fall of Suharto, the Balinese authorities have been worried about security problems. By stressing that Bali is prosperous and safe, they appear eager to separate their island from the turbulent economic and political crisis affecting Indonesia. Indeed, despite the fact that Bali has had its fair share of conflicts in these years of turmoil, the island seems to be sheltered from the ethnic and religious strife which is tearing apart other regions. According to Balinese and foreign media alike, the reason why this should be the case usually revolves around a twofold explanation. First, the overwhelming influence of Hinduism, which protects the Balinese from the proselytizing zeal that is seen as the mark of other religions, such as Islam and Christianity. Second, the all-out reliance on tourism, which makes the Balinese keenly aware that any kind of local unrest would be detrimental to their prosperity. Thus, during the campaign preceding the general election in June 1999, one could see roadside signs bearing slogans such as 'Bali aman: Turis datang' ('Bali is safe: the tourists come').

In reality, there have been numerous violent incidents on the island since 1998– particularly what is referred to as *kasus adat* in the Balinese media (Warren 2000) —but the Balinese authorities have been careful not to spread the news abroad. And even when this carefully nurtured image of the Balinese as a peace-loving people is at risk of being jeopardized, such as by widespread reporting of the riots that followed the failure of Megawati's bid for the presidency in October 1999, the responsibility is all too willingly blamed on foreign agents as provocateurs.

As a matter of fact, the problem is that Bali is indeed seen as prosperous and safe, so much so that the Balinese authorities are at a loss to prevent other Indonesians entering their island, attracted as they are by the seemingly inexhaustible gold mine of tourism. The relative prosperity of Bali, at a time when the rest of Indonesia is in dire straits, has caused an influx of migrant workers—mostly Muslims from Java, Madura and Lombok—in search of job opportunities. This is perceived as unfair, as the government has persuaded jobless Balinese to transmigrate to other islands, while non-Balinese jobseekers are permitted to enter Bali freely. At the same time, Indonesian Chinese refugees from the anti-Chinese riots in Jakarta and other main cities of Java have taken shelter in Bali and settled there, putting additional strains on the environment and infrastructure of the already densely populated areas of south Bali. The increasingly conspicuous presence of these immigrants has triggered social, ethnic and religious conflicts on the island, whose population is becoming more and more heterogeneous.[10]

The fear of Bali being overrun by 'outsiders' *(pendatang)* reached unprecedented proportions in April 2002, with the disclosure of a plan to build a bridge linking the island of Bali with Java—scheduled to start in 2003 with Chinese financial and technical assistance. A second bridge is also planned, linking Java and Sumatra over the Sunda Strait. While the rationale put forward for the project is said to facilitate liaison between these islands in order to boost their economic development, the main purpose appears to be to tie Bali and Sumatra more securely to Java, in order to strengthen Indonesia as a unitary state. In any case, Balinese opinion leaders have vigorously rejected this plan on the grounds that the bridge is expected to lure more migrants to Bali and will likely cause further environmental, economic and social problems on the island. Aware that the Balinese concern about a cultural invasion from Java would be insufficient grounds to reject the project, the governor, as well as prominent members of the provincial parliament, have been calling for a careful review of such a project in order to assess its effect on the carrying capacity of the island.

But disturbing signs of mounting tensions against newcomers have been noticeable for several years. As expressed in a recent critical self-portrait by representatives of the new generation of Balinese intellectuals, the growing heterogeneity of the population on the island, in terms of ethnic belonging and religious affiliation, is producing, amongst many Balinese, 'a feeling of insecurity which manifests itself in the growing readiness to use their own

culture defensively against the ethnical and religiously others' (Ramseyer 2001: 11). To name only a few examples of this defensive attitude, all across Bali, noticeboards have been posted at the entrance to villages, which read 'pemulung dilarang masuk' ('scavengers forbidden to enter'), warnings that are meant to deter non-Balinese Indonesians from intruding. Then, in August 2000, after the municipality of Denpasar had decided to impose a system of 'visas' on migrant workers, a poll was conducted by the *Bali Post,* which found that over 90 per cent of the Balinese respondents agreed that such a system should apply to the whole island (*Bali Post,* 12 August 2000). Finally, it has been reported in Balinese and foreign media that local authorities regularly conduct raids in Denpasar and elsewhere in which house-to-house checks result in Indonesians of non-Balinese origin being harassed and sometimes expelled from the island. Not infrequently, these inter-ethnic encounters end in the death of immigrants accused of thievery, with the Balinese protagonists justifying their actions as part of their responsibility to protect their 'Balineseness'.

Yet, not all Balinese are so taken in by this constant appeal to *Kebalian,* and on occasion voices are being heard denouncing the perils of 'Balinism'. Thus, when in October 2001, amid rumours of an imminent revision of the law on regional autonomy, President Megawati expressed her concern about the rise of 'narrow-minded regionalism', the *Bali Post* devoted its editorial to a firm condemnation of *Semangat Kedaerahan Sempit*. The next day, the paper launched a special comment column, *Giliran Anda* ('Your Turn'), inviting readers to give their opinion on *Hapus Kedaerahan Sempit* ('wipe out narrow-minded regionalism'). Most of the readers appeared to share their president's concern by stressing the dangers of *daerah sentris* attitudes, though while some of them were aiming at *Bali sentris,* for others *daerah* clearly meant the districts.

Whatever the case, it happens that quite a few leaders of the more vocal younger generation of Balinese intellectuals and activists reject the claims of *Kebalian,* which they see as a prison impeding the progress of the Balinese (Santikarma 2001). Specifically, they assert that the Balinese have become captives of the touristic image of Bali as the last paradise—the 'Island of the Gods'—which is dictating what they should and should not do if they want to retain their 'Balineseness'. Thus, the implementation of regional autonomy has triggered a strife amongst Balinese opinion leaders, concerning not only the desirable course of tourism development and a fair distribution of its revenue, but even more so the very definition of their identity and the place of their island within Indonesia.

Epilogue

The bombing of 12 October 2002, which cost the lives of 202 people, would initially alleviate this dissent, by prompting a unanimous outburst of solidarity among the Balinese population. They faced the fatal blow in their most proven fashion, by means of ritual. On 15 November, they held an elaborate purification

ceremony *(Pamarisuddha Karipubhaya),* in order to restore the cosmic order by liberating the souls of the dead from their earthly bonds. As a result, the Balinese succeeded in appropriating the tragic event, by accommodating it within their own frame of reference.

Yet, if celebrating this purification ceremony had comforted the Balinese and placated their gods, it had hardly resolved the problems generated by the bombing, namely the collapse of an economy based on tourism and the severe social crisis which ensued. Under these conditions, one could have expected an outburst of inter-religious conflicts as soon as it turned out that the bombing had been committed in the name of Islam. The fact that this did not happen is due to the vigilance of the regional authorities, who were quick to put down any wish for vengeance on the part of the Balinese against outsiders. Yet, behind an appearance of composure, the assertion of Balinese identity has become increasingly politicized. Thus it is that discriminatory measures were taken against the immigrants, by conferring on the customary villages reinforced powers to police their inhabitants. The result has been a demarcation between the residents originating from the village *(krama wed),* ex-officio members of its institutions, and the newcomers (*krama tamiu,* literally 'guest members'), excluded from worshipping the gods considered to be the legitimate owners of the village.

One notices that, faced with an aggression from outside, the Balinese withdrew into what is most exclusively theirs, that is not *agama* but *adat*. Indeed, since what defines them as a non-Muslim (and non-Christian) minority in a multi-religious nation is no longer their exclusive property, while their religious identity is becoming controversial, it is understandable that the Balinese response to the bombing would be expressed in ethnic (Balinese versus Javanese) rather than in religious (Hindu versus Islam) terms.

Notes

1 Between 1970 and 1980, the number of foreign visitors to Bali multiplied from fewer than 30,000 to around 300,000, reaching about 1 million in 1990 and up to about 2 million in 2000 (1,357,000 direct foreign arrivals in 2001)—this without taking into account Indonesian tourists, for whom estimations diverge widely. During the same period, hotel capacity increased from less than 500 rooms in 1970 to around 4,000 in 1980, jumping to 20,000 in 1990 and up to well over 40,000 rooms in 2000. All of this, on an island which is only 5,600 km^2, with a population of over three million people.

2 The Padanggalak case is significant, in the sense that, for the first time, government-backed private interests had to yield to customary rights. It so happened that the governor of Bali, who was said to have an interest in the venture with his family, was himself a member of the customary village of Kesiman, responsible for the site. Threatened with expulsion from the council of his village—a sanction akin to 'social death' and a source of great shame for a Balinese—the

governor was forced to retreat and ordered to cancel the project Eventually, the beach was returned to its original state.

3 To this day, Balinese leaders are still intent on obtaining special autonomy status for the province, but they tend to think that the move should come from the *bupati* themselves, who should be willing to release their authority to the governor, rather than from Balinese delegates in Jakarta.

4 Taken together, these three areas appropriate roughly 50 per cent of the province's budget (APBD) and 90 per cent of the regional revenues (PAD).

5 'Bali is a unity of religion, tradition, and culture…When Bali has become a special region, it will possess the full right to manage itself. Including the right to forward its Balineseness…'

6 One of the most remarkable initiatives taken in this respect is the launching of a Balinese television channel, named *Bali TV,* in May 2002. With the backing of the provincial authorities, religious institutions and community leaders, this private channel, owned by the proprietors of the *Bali Post* media group, has been given the mission to foster Balinese cultural and religious identity, with a view to promoting the development of tourism. At the launching ceremony, the governor expressed his concern over the flood of alien values affecting the lives of the Balinese, especially the youth. The director of *Bali TV* declared that in the era of regional autonomy, each province should have its own television channel to accommodate local aspirations.

7 In March 2001, a regulation based on regional autonomy was issued by the governor, which changed the name of the Balinese customary village back to its 'original' form, with a view to giving it new lustre *(Peraturan Daerah Propinsi Bali nomor 3 tahun 2001 tentang Desa Pakraman)*.

8 In October 2001, the proposal by State Minister for Culture and Tourism to register the temple complex of Besakih as a World Cultural Heritage site sparked controversy and heated debate in Bali. Most religious leaders rejected the idea, viewing it as akin to selling their temple to UNESCO. As the 'Mother Temple' of Bali, they claimed, Besakih does not belong to the Indonesian government but to the Balinese Hindus.

9 As they like to put it: 'Kami hanya dapat kencing dan beraknya wisatawan, sedangkan pendapatan diterima Badung' ('The tourists only urinate and defecate in our district, while they spend their money in Badung').

10 In the very words of the governor, 'Being prosperous is a dilemma for us. We cannot prevent people from coming and working in Bali. Indonesia is a united country, and as such we cannot close our door on others. Everybody has the right to make a living here. But in all honesty, the influx of seasonal migrant workers has created serious population, environmental and security problems. It is difficult for us to precisely register the number of these migrants, who usually reside in the already densely populated areas of Denpasar or Badung regencies. We don't have adequate infrastructures, including for housing, water and sanitary facilities, to support them. As a result, we see so many new squatters in the city of Denpasar, creating slum areas. A lot of them are jobless and could possibly affect the crime rate on the island' (*Jakarta Post,* 14 August 2001).

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8
Regional autonomy, Malayness and power hierarchy in the Riau Archipelago

Carole Faucher

This chapter explores some aspects of the popular discourse on ethnicity and Malayness in the light of the formation of a new province that will split off the 3,200 islands of the Riau Archipelago from the Sumatra part of Riau province (see Map 8.1). My interest lies in the construction and modelling of personhood through ethnic, kinship, geopolitical and nation-bound memberships. The concept of ethnicity, with its variety of modes such as historical imagination and self-awareness, is, more often than not, considered the focus of reference in the portrayal of one's own group's membership. Nagata defined ethnicity as:

> A category or group with some perception of shared culture, one or more aspects of which will be used primordially as a charter for membership (and for excluding specific non-members). It has the capacity for an institutionally self-supporting and self-sustaining existence.
>
> Nagata (1981:92)

We will see later that Nagata's definition remains the most appropriate in the case of the Malay aristocrats of the Riau Archipelago. Furthermore, Malayness in Riau should be regarded in terms of both primordialist sentiments—factual or imagined—and the cultural expression of these sentiments. Its complexity encompasses consciousness, ideology and imagination (Govers and Vermeulen 1997:5). My argument can be seen to be supporting Van den Berghe (1981:27), who asserts that descent is the central feature of ethnicity, even if the common descent ascribed to an ethnic group is fictive.

We will see, however, that, in the case of Malayness, this construction of an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1991) or 'locality' (Appadurai 1996) based on the presupposition of a genealogical membership is particular to Indonesia and is much less applicable to present-day Malaysia and Singapore. As Hirschman accurately suggested:

> The hypothesis of ethnicity as a universal primordial bond or extended kinship feeling among a people cannot be more than a partial explanation for the state of ethnic relations across societies.
>
> Hirschman (1986:331)

Map 8.1 Riau islands.

We should not forget that the designation of ethnic groups, as it is understood in political discourse, remains a European construction used for classification purposes during the colonial period (Rivera 2000:103). Therefore, the individual awareness of belonging to a given group can only be investigated in the light of local modes of discernment.

One of these modes of discernment for the Malays of the Riau Archipelago is the awareness of being bound through a common history to the Melayu royalty.[1] In popular discourse, Malayness in the Riau Archipelago still appears in the light

of its original historical construction based on the centrifugal—or Mandala-type — organization of *keraajan* (sultanates) (Wolters 1999; Benjamin 1999). It emerges with the same qualities of primordiality in the local configuration of one's own personhood, with significant attributes associated with genealogies, physical characteristics and land of origin. Geertz outlines the group's identity as being the 'corporate sentiment of oneness' (1973:314). Ethnic belonging can, in certain specific circumstances, turn into a political expression of cultural identity (Cohen 1998: 25). Yet, it can also be repressed in favour of a more operational nationalistic sentiment, which I will discuss later. Nevertheless, in both cases, the patterns of exclusion/inclusion always come into sight through the form of historical validation, or, as Kilani (1995) puts it, through the 'rapport au passé' through which individuals seek to 'identify themselves to the past rather than identifying the past to them'.[2] This 'rapport au passé' defines, in my view, a process that is different from historical reconstruction, in the sense that it systematically erases any perception of temporal boundaries in the make-up of personhood.

Questions of identity have recently begun to occupy the central stage in political discourse across different regions of Indonesia. This does not mean that identity, and in this case ethnicity, was not already a central component of the political process during the New Order. As this chapter will hopefully demonstrate, the revival of ethnic sentiments can be understood as the reconfiguration of a power structure that had already been operative under the former regime.

One of the major political issues in the Riau Archipelago today is the ongoing project leading to the division of the Riau province into two parts. This will lead to the creation of a new province, regrouping the 3,200 islands of the archipelago under the name of Kepri *(Kepulauan Riau)*. The bill, passed in 2002, was criticized by the Governor of Riau, who had publicly objected to it on a number of occasions from the time it was first proposed in 1999. There was, however, already an understanding that the Indonesian legislature would still pass the bill, with or without the support of Riau's governor. Nevertheless, in early 2004, the bill had yet to be fully implemented, and we can feel a growing lack of interest toward the issue among the Malays of the Riau islands. Interestingly, between the time the bill was first discussed publicly and its passing, the two laws on regional autonomy have been officially implemented. These laws, as well as the constitutional amendment on regional autonomy, delegates most regional powers to the regencies *(kabupaten)* and municipalities *(kota),* rather than to the provinces (Bell 2001:803). This empowering of the regency and municipal administrations has rendered the efforts and administrative changes needed for the creation of a new province useless for many, at least at the level of economic developments.

Immediately following the implementation of the regional autonomy laws, a new regency was created, *Kabupaten Karimun,* which has its administrative seat in Tanjungbalai. Previously, the Karimun Islands were under the jurisdiction of

the Kepri regency and all administrative matters were taken care of in Tanjungpinang. Furthermore, because Tanjungpinang is also a municipality *(kota),* it was suddenly put in the awkward position of being the seat of both a regent and a mayor who hold equal power under the new laws. With all these sudden changes at the local administrative level—such as the splitting of the Kepri Kabupaten into two and subsequently into four,[3] and the empowerment of both the regent *(bupati)* and the mayor *(walikota)* (especially on investment matters)—the focus of attention has been radically diverted away from regional to local concerns, and economic competition has been fostered between regencies and between the Kepri regency and the city of Tanjungpinang, as well as between these administrative divisions and the free-trade zone of Batam.[4] Following this, issues of local political disputes in Tanjungpinang have captured tremendous attention, such as the charging of the Kepri regent, Huzrin Hood, with corruption and misuse of public money, and his subsequent sentencing to two years in jail in November 2003.[5] The latter had been, up until then, a major actor in the project leading to the formation of the new province. Many of my respondents now see the project mostly as a platform for political actors seeking to fulfil their own personal ambitions.

One of the original motives supposedly behind the Kepri Province project was the creation of a Malay province. The initiative was initially received with strong local support from a majority of Malays. However, the originally enthusiastic response gave way to more ambivalent sentiments, especially as it also generated feelings of insecurity among members of other ethnic groups, and among Malays who could not trace their descent to the former Riau-Lingga Kingdom. Furthermore, in February 2002, a group of Malay aristocrats visited the governor to express their concerns about the current development which, according to them, did not take into consideration Malay *adat*. In other words, they felt increasingly excluded from the process coordinated by the BP3KR (*Badan Persiapan Pembentukan Provinsi Kepri*—the Planning Board to form the Kepri Province). The disengagement of Malay aristocrats was viewed rather positively by some of my informants who disagreed with the aristocrats' *(raja-raja)* definition of Malayness, and with consequent possible developments such as a reinstitution of the former sultanate and the implementation of Shariah law. One of my informants from Tanjungpinang mentioned: 'They want to proceed according to the Malay tradition and Malay law but there is no such thing as "Malay law"; we should go according to Indonesian law, not the Malay *adat*'.

The problem, in fact, is a question of inclusion and exclusion in relation to the local hierarchy of power. Aristocratic Malays have been perceived by many as the only ones, besides the Chinese, who enjoyed some economic advantages and other privileges under the New Order regime. For example, middle-range positions in the civil service were in the majority occupied by Malays, many of those from aristocratic descent. In addition, these positions were transferred from generation to generation, leaving almost no chance for others to enter the bureaucratic sphere of work. After the passing of the regional autonomy laws,

those same bureaucrats have maintained their position or have been nominated to the level of decision making, gaining full power to design and to define the political, cultural and social curriculum to their own advantage. This is not to say that the current feelings are wholly negative toward this reorganization. Rather, it is ambiguity toward what it means to be Melayu (Malay), and who should be considered as such, that prevails.

From Bugis and *Orang Laut* to Malay

The monarchy-bound construction of Malayness in the Riau Archipelago only allows the possibility of Bugis ancestry as an outside component. Interestingly, Minangkabau origin—which could similarly been associated with the Malay Kingdom of Siak in eighteenth-century Sumatra—is systematically rejected. It is relatively common for Malays in the Riau Archipelago to legitimize their own 'Malayness' with reference to one or more Bugis ancestors—as long as these ancestors were part of the aristocracy of Pulau Penyengat. This was made possible by Raja Haji (a fearless warrior and a pious Muslim of Bugis origin) who led a mercenary force against the Minangkabau invasion in the Johor-Riau-Lingga kingdom and thus played a crucial role in restoring the Malay sultanate in the eighteenth century (Andaya and Matheson 1979:109). In return, the Malay sultan granted the Bugis warrior the office of *Yangdipertuan Muda* (assistant to the sultan) to be retained by his descendants in perpetuity (ibid). As a consequence, Raja Haji's descendants ruled the Riau settlement of the Johor-Riau-Lingga empire, located on the island of Penyengat, during the nineteenth century (Matheson 1989:154), while the Lingga portion of the sultanate remained under Malay rulers. Although conscious of their Bugis origin, the Riau rulers espoused the Malay *adat,* legitimizing their position by pronouncing Bugis as belonging to the Malay world. One of Raja Haji's most reputable descendants, Raja Ali Haji (born in 1809), a literary man and author of the well-known *Tuhfat al-Nafis* (The Precious Gift) is in fact still considered to be 'one of the champions of Malay customs, tradition and language, as a custodian of pure Malay culture' (Van der Putten 2004:122).

According to the Malay aristocrats *(raja-raja)* of Pulau Penyengat, all the islands surrounding Tanjungpinang and Penyengat are known to be inhabited primarily by *Orang Laut* (sea nomads) descendants and thus are looked upon as being backward and oblivious of the Malay *adat*. This labelling is, however, strongly contested by those same inhabitants. To them the appellation *Orang Laut* is highly pejorative, and should refer only to those fisher folk who do spear fishing (Wee, 1985:571) and who positively identify themselves as *Orang Laut,* whether they are Muslim converts or not. A young man from non-aristocratic background remarked:

> For us, the appellation *Orang Laut* is synonymous with 'losers'. *Orang Laut* are not educated, most of them cannot even read or write, they cannot

> succeed in anything and that is why they have to live on the sea. Of course, they are also Malays like us, even if they are not always Muslims. But they are good for nothing, they don't even have the capacity to learn how to settle on the land.

Being associated with *Orang Laut* in terms of identity construction is clearly an insult for most other Malays. Interestingly, however, the *Orang Laut* are nevertheless considered by the aristocrats as belonging to the Melayu hierarchy, where they are located at the bottom. In fact, the dynamics of Malayness can only be understood in the Riau Archipelago by examining the pattern of inclusion/ exclusion of *Orang Laut* descendants, their historical incorporation into the Malay hierarchy as an unintended consequence of the Dutch reorganization of Malayness, with ethnic categorization made through a census based essentially on self-identification.

The *Orang Suku Laut* consist of communities of sea nomads. As Miksic puts it they were:

> probably always a conglomeration of *suku* [groups] subsumed under the term [they were] *Orang Laut* only in the sense that they shared a common way of life on the water.
>
> Miksic (1985:15)

The significant historical contribution of the *Orang Laut* to the Malay sultanates of the Johor-Riau-Lingga has been well documented by historians (see for example Andaya 1975, Trocki 1979, Miksic 1985, Wolters 1999), but the Java-centred history, taught in school until the recent implementation of regional autonomy laws, prevented access to this information by lay people in Riau. Furthermore, as I will discuss later, the understanding of Malay history has been transmitted through word of mouth by the descendants of the former rulers who tended to recreate, through selective memory, a Malay ideal based essentially on the sultanate model. This model reflects the idea that *Orang Laut* people, or anyone else who is not connected by lineage to the former rulers, belong to low-status groups.

However, this positioning does not necessarily reflect the hierarchy that existed during the Johor Empire. According to Andaya (1975), the *Orang Laut* were considered one of the principal components in the power structure of the Johor Kingdom during the seventeenth century. Their duties were:

> To gather sea products for the China trade, perform certain special services for the ruler at weddings, funerals, or a hunt, serve as transport for envoys and royal missives, man the ships and serve as a fighting force on the ruler's fleet, and patrol the waters of the kingdom.
>
> Andaya (1975:7)

Sopher mentions that Malay rulers of the Johor Empire organized the *Orang Laut* into a 'machine for piracy', in effect 'a guerrilla of mercenaries of a political state' used for 'extracting a large share of the profits from the coastal trade passing through the strait of Singapore and for exploiting by violence the productivity of adjacent coastal settlements' (1965:88). Political power was strongly linked to spiritual superiority, and the fierce *Illanun* (pirates) were supposed to possess the knowledge *(ilmu)* to practice mystic rites that procured invulnerability *(ilmu kebatinan)* (Rutter 1987 [1930]:193). Interestingly, it was with the arrival of the Bugis in the eighteenth century—from the island now known as Sulawesi—that relations between the Malay rulers and *Orang Laut* started eroding (Benjamin 2002:45). This means that the shaping of the Malay hierarchy in the Riau Archipelago was foremost due to the creation of a Bugis aristocratic elite, rather than the product of Malay aristocrats of Malacca and Johor.

In the Riau Archipelago, the members of the *raja*-aristocracy, who claim direct descent from these Bugis rulers and are represented by the aristocracy of Pulau Penyengat, acknowledge two categories of Malays: the *Melayu murni* (pure Malays), which include de facto the aristocrats of Bugis origin such as themselves, and the *suku Melayu* (*Orang Laut* descendants who settled on the land). This categorization impacts the local population at different levels. On a positive note, it does imply that, from the point of view of the local aristocracy at least, *Orang Laut* and their descendants are as much indigenous to the Riau Archipelago as at least the Bugis' descendants. On the other hand, the ambiguous —but not official— status of being a descendant of sea nomads, suggests that their position is not only peripheral to the Malays but, due to the fact that their ancestors lived on water, they cannot even make any conclusive ethno-historical claim regarding land rights— not even in symbolic terms, as was successfully done by the aristocrats of Pulau Penyengat in the 1980s (Wee 2002).

Today, the notion of *Orang Melayu* as an independent community still refers to a monarchical system of authority. It includes, by definition, all the groups who can assert that, at one point or another in the course of the history of the Malay monarchy, they had been part of a sultanate, either as members of the ruling group *(raja)* or as subjects *(rakyat)* (Milner 1995:283). *Orang Melayu* are bound to a territory, the Malay world, or *Alam Melayu,* which is defined by Wee as follows:

> The territory of a network of genealogically related kingdoms, located in the Malayan peninsula including Singapore, the east coast of Sumatra, the coast of Borneo from Brunei westwards to Banjarmasin and of course the RiauLingga archipelago itself.
>
> Wee (1985:60)

From the Riau aristocracy's perspective, the classification of 'real Malays' excludes, by definition, all the sub-Malay communities that cannot claim any

consanguineous descent from aristocrats of one of the Malay sultanates. These sub-Malay communities are represented by the *Orang Laut* and *Orang Laut* descendants and individuals from Sumatra of other origin that identify themselves as Malays but who are believed to be, from the perspective of some aristocrats in the Riau Archipelago, of Minangkabau origin. As mentioned earlier, the aristocracy *(raja-raja)* claim descent from the Bugis as the important component of their Malay identity.

With the exception of aristocrats who keep written genealogies, descent for most of the insular Riau Malays cannot be traced. For many aristocrats, redefining Malayness outside the logic of a sultanate structure, as it is the case with Malaysia and Singapore, remains unacceptable. This implies that, if exclusive indigenous rights are to be implemented, anyone who cannot assert to being Malay in the way defined by the aristocrats would most probably be classed as an outsider.

In search of Malay roots

Two important factors influence the affiliation to Malayness. First, there is resistance on the part of people of aristocratic descent to ethnicizing Malayness, because this would result in a weakening of their own hierarchical structure. In the Riau Archipelago today, Malayness is still defined in relation to the former kingdom *(keraajan)* and the members of the aristocratic elite are generally perceived to be bearers of historical and cultural knowledge. Their identity as 'Malay' is still constructed around the claim that every Malay has been, at one time or another, associated through kin affiliation to one of the Malay sultanates. Malay commoners, meaning individuals who cannot trace their origin to a Malay kingdom either in Malaya or Sumatra, contest the restriction of 'real Malay' to those who have a recognized royal connection, not by opposing the exclusive charter based on vertical relationship, but by alleging themselves to be members of this vertical charter. The claim made by a few individuals to being the only real Malays *(Melayu murni)* is, according to my non-aristocrat informants, untenable and the result of past political contrivances between the Dutch administration and a few opportunist Malay aristocrats.

The second factor is the reference to core centres where historical vestiges are regarded as evidence of Malay royalty. These *kampung Melayu* (Malay 'villages') are also commonly associated with backwardness, traditions and rurality by town dwellers. The centres of power are located in geographical areas that are described as 'pure Malay villages'—that are in proximity to urbanized zones, such as the islands of Belakang Padang for Batam, Pulau Buru for Tanjung Balai in Karimun, and Pulau Penyengat for Tanjungpinang. These centres of power are located at the periphery of business or administrative centres; their main quality is that they are almost free of transmigrants and are inhabited by members of the Malay aristocracy. Oral tradition circulating from these centres remains the only source for the transmission of local history among

the Malays of the Riau Archipelago. Aristocrats living on these islands are thus the main providers of historical memories and mythologies related to the Malay world, with strong connections to Malaysia and Singapore. A young educated informant of Tanjung Balai said:

> The biggest problem for us is that we did not learn anything about the Malay history in school. The only things that we learnt concerned Jakarta and the history of Java. We have to learn about our own history by ourselves, to tell our children what the elderly tell us. How else can we really know who we are? We are Malay, not Javanese, and we should be also Malaysian. We all hope that, one day, Riau will be part of Malaysia again.

Oral tradition, however, follows the centrifugal pattern, stories relating these *kampung Melayu* to the former sultanates are not only praised, but also empower the listeners who inevitably link this corpus of mythology to their own 'imagined' ancestors. The members of the aristocracy are well respected for their high erudition, especially in relation to history and to the Malay language. Old aristocrats who reside in the *kampung* of Pulau Belankang Padang, Pulau Buru and Pulau Penyengat are considered the main sources of historical knowledge among Malay commoners. Furthermore, a source of spiritual power emanates from each of these centres that continues to connect 'pure Malays' to the former kingdoms. Water, for example, acts as a powerful symbolic representation of Malayness. As a female informant on Pulau Penyengat said: 'If you drink the water of Penyengat, Pulau Buru or Belakang Padang, you always will want to come back to these places, you will henceforth consider that place as your home.' As a consequence of this popular belief, the Malay portions of these islands are carefully guarded by their inhabitants, and the fear of being invaded by transmigrants is a daily concern. 'We always come back to Belakang Padang, remarked a young informant living in Batam. Our mother always makes sure that we would never forget our roots by serving us water from the well.' An analogy can be drawn between the bonding substance embodied by the water and the concept of a mandala-type configuration of Malay ethnicity. Malayness can only be asserted by recognizing its exclusive origin, its historically defined emergence.

Another important issue is the differing sources of historical identity that Malays of Kepri and Karimun tend to identify with. As mentioned earlier, Malays of Kepri mostly turn toward the history of the Bugis' portion of the Riau-Lingga empire, with its former seat on Pulau Penyengat, as a source of ethnic identity. On the other hand, many of the informants encountered in Tanjung Balai Karimun and Pulau Buru told me that Pulau Penyengat is only one of the multiple sources of Malayness. They themselves believe it to be more important to have links with the Siak Kingdom of Sumatra and with the Malay portion of the Johor-Riau-Lingga empire. This means that they do not need to justify their

Malayness in terms of Bugis ancestry as Malays in the new Kepri regency tend to do. Malays of Pulau Buru complained to me that, since the beginning of the monetary crisis in 1997, aristocrats from Penyengat have stopped visiting them, do not help them and refuse to acknowledge any form of family link—*saudara* (consanguineous) or even *saudara angkat* (fictive)—despite the strong historical and political links between Penyengat and Pulau Buru as emphasized in local narratives. This distance between the aristocrats of Penyengat and the commoners of both Karimun and Pulau Buru is particularly revealing in the sense that the Malay inhabitants of Pulau Buru, as I explained earlier, claim themselves to be of aristocratic background from a different lineage.

On the other hand, Malay commoners in Kepri or Karimun, systematically refuse to acknowledge any possible relations with the *Orang Laut,* whose boats can be seen from the coasts of the major islands. An informant from Tanjungpinang described them as follows: 'They are so dirty, that they cook, eat and sleep in their sampans. Even when they settle on the beach in housing provided by the government, they do not change their habit.'

They are, however, fascinated by the relationship the *Orang Laut* have with the sea spirits from which they are said to draw their reputed magic powers. Their presence offshore attracts locals, mostly from Tanjungpinang, who look at them from the beach as if they are strange creatures—feared and admired, but not truly human. None of the informants I encountered dared to identify with them. For these informants the worst insult is to propose the idea that they might themselves be descendants of *Orang Laut*. This aversion toward the presumption of being genealogically related to sea nomads on the one hand, and to other *suku* transmigrants on the other, invalidates the possibility of a contextualized ethnic membership for the individuals concerned. Even with access to information from both Malaysia and Singapore and, thus, access to other forms of constructing Malayness, Malays in Riau associate the term *bangsa* to Indonesian-ness, not to Malayness. It is therefore extremely difficult to imagine an ethnic category through a non-primordialist logic. As a Malay woman with no known aristocratic background explained to me:

> I don't think it would be right to ask the Javanese here [Tanjungpinang] or people from any other *suku* [ethnic groups] to suddenly call themselves 'Melayu', because they are not Malay. They would feel very uncomfortable about this and this would create a lot of tensions. I really don't understand how this could be made possible.

An overtly strong expression of ethnic identity is, above all, a political statement that accentuates the recognition of a power-base away from the geopolitical influence of Jakarta without necessarily breaking away from it. Principally because it overlaps with Minangkabau lands of origin, the Riau Province, in its entirety, is not considered a Malay province by the inhabitants of the Riau Archipelago. The Riau Province was the result of a treaty signed between the

Malay Sultan of Siak and the colonial administration of the Dutch East Indies. The treaty offered an area of some 700 km^2 that covered the kingdom of Siak and its dependencies in the northern parts of Sumatra (Chou 1997:148; Ruiter 1997: 130). The Kingdom of Riau-Lingga, which comprised over 3,200 islands off the east coast of Sumatra, was annexed to the Dutch Indies after the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, in which both colonial administrations—the British and the Dutch —agreed to mutually recognize exclusive spheres of influence. The boundaries of Riau Province, which was created in 1948, overlap with the territories of other communities, principally Minangkabau and Batak. However, it was only in 1950 that the Riau Archipelago was officially annexed to the Riau Province and in 1959 that Tanjungpinang lost its role as administrative centre. According to my informants, this overlapping is partly responsible for the 'invasion' of non-Melayu migrants, another source of complication in terms of defining what it means to be a Malay.

In the Riau Archipelago people interconnect notions of identity with lands of origin. For people there, being Malay *(Orang Melayu)* is thus intrinsically associated with the *Alam Melayu* (the 'Malay world'). Since the Riau Archipelago is considered one of the important parts of the *Alam Melayu* in Indonesia, Malayness conveys the right to occupy the land by virtue of ancestry. This right, however, is not translated into legal terms, but contains the probability —real or imagined—of being suddenly excluded from the power structure on the mere basis of not being considered 'pure Malay'. It did, in fact, trigger some worries among both the non-aristocratic Malays and non-Malays when the project for the creation of a new province, comprising only the 3,200 islands of the archipelago, publicly emerged in 1999 (*Sijori Pos* 17 May 1999). Because it would include a place that was considered only 'Malay', the formation of Kepri Province seemed at first indisputably appealing to the members of the aristocracy. It however generated substantial concern among Malay commoners right from the beginning. Without any written genealogy to prove their origin, Malay commoners must often debate the relationship between their own ancestors and the officially recognized Malay royalty.

There was, in fact, apprehension toward the project as one being led mostly by aristocrats, whose rhetoric of 'real Malayness' has the potential of being incorporated into law. This claim of 'Malayness' has been a source of worries among most non-aristocrat Malays, many of whom accuse the aristocrats of practicing nepotism. Many feel excluded from the political agenda of the *bupati* (regent) of the Kepri regency. For example, a rumour that had been widely circulated, insinuated that, in order to raise his chance of becoming governor of Kepri, the *bupati* had paid the aristocrats of the archipelago to go to Pekanbaru to meet the governor, and to subsequently organize a passive demonstration in Jakarta in February 2002. Whether well founded or not, this rumour well illustrates the irony and scepticism shown by commoner Malays in Tanjungpinang, toward both the *bupati's* and the aristocrats' intentions. Thus, the claim made by the Riau Malay aristocrats of having been victims of external

agendas (Derks 1997, Wee 2002) through, notably, the creation of the Growth Triangle, and further 'dispossessed and impoverished to make room for these newcomers' (Wee 2002), has generated, and continues to generate, ambiguous sentiments among the non-aristocratic Malays.

The boundaries between the aristocrats and the commoners appear in local narratives to be fraught with prejudice and distrust; as was stated by an informant in Tanjungpinang: 'We do respect them as *raja* but we don't want them to hold any form of legal power'. Another informant commented that the aristocrats used to be the only Malays who were privileged under the Suharto regime, but that they were intensely engaged in nepotism and corruption: 'Now that they cannot gain anything anymore, they pretend to talk for all of us while, in fact, we all know that they want to pocket money for themselves once again'.

Since the 1970s the Riau Province has experienced impressive economic development, fuelled by oil production, forestry and large-scale rubber and palm oil plantations (Mubyarto 1997). In the 1990s, the establishment of the Growth Triangle, with the participation of Malaysia and Singapore, linked the economies of the Riau Archipelago, Johor (Malaysia) and Singapore. This agreement between the three nation-states suggested that the inter-regional economic zones were now united into a transnational hierarchy (Perry 1998:87) in terms of a new class logic that positioned Singapore at the top and the Riau Archipelago at the bottom. Because of this, the creation of the Kepri Province was seen right from the start by the local population as an important step in helping the Riau Archipelago to reach a level of economic cooperation with the two neighbouring nation-states, cooperation that is assumed would be beneficial for them, as it used to be before the Archipelago was officially annexed to Riau Province in 1950. However, questions such as: Who would really benefit?; Who can be considered as truly belonging to the Riau Archipelago, and not a transmigrant *(pendatang)*?; Who holds the political and social power?; Who determines access to key social and political roles?; these are questions of great concern to many.

Without being able to officially assert any form of kin relations with the former kingdom of Johor-Riau-Lingga, commoner Malays assert their own Malayness by claiming descent from the former Kingdom of Siak, the Kingdom of Malacca or even from the pre-Islamic period of peninsular Malaysia. There is constant awareness of the geographical boundaries of the Malay world that 'must' exclude, in all cases, the sea and the *Orang Laut,* and should include a noble past, even if it has to be pre-Islamic. Interestingly this conceptualization of Malay identity often transcends the religious components—otherwise conceived to be intrinsic to that identity. Myths of origin, of people or of place, are regularly used in the popular discourse to continually reaffirm the boundaries between ethnic groups. The following case study will help, I hope, to illustrate this pattern.

Pak Rubian

A former school teacher in his seventies, Pak Rubian, presents himself as a 'real Malay', despite the fact that he does not possess any written genealogy. Pak Rubian was born in Deli, North Sumatra, which used to be part of the former Sultanate of Siak. He said that the Malay spoken in Deli is referred to as 'Rokan Malay' and is slightly different from the Malay spoken in the Riau Archipelago. He arrived in Tanjungpinang in 1948. He went there first to study and decided to stay after he was offered a position as a teacher in a local school. He was sponsored *(yang menjamin)* by a relative who was already working in Tanjungpinang. 'There were only *Orang Melayu* at that time in the Riau Islands. Nobody could come from other parts of Indonesia without being sponsored by a local. There were a little less than 3,000 persons at the time, all Malays.' Until 1955, he was paid in Strait dollars. He said that it was much more advantageous to be paid in 'Singapore dollars' than in Dutch or Indonesian currencies and for this reason many Malays from Sumatra would try to migrate to the Riau Archipelago. 'It was possible at that time to travel to Singapore freely, without a passport. People from other parts of Indonesia needed a local sponsor to come to Riau Islands, and from here [Tanjungpinang], they could go freely into Singapore. Many people went to work in Singapore and decided to stay there for a while. The Dutch would sometimes make life quite difficult for us, so many Malays preferred to move to Singapore. So many *raja* left at this time. But they all came back after. There were almost no *raja* left in Riau during that period.'

I discussed the case of Pak Rubian with an aristocrat and former immigration officer from Pulau Penyengat. The latter refused to recognize Pak Rubian as a 'real Malay' *(Orang Melayu)*. Since Pak Rubian did not possess any written genealogy proving his descent from the Sultanate of Siak, he was most probably a Minangkabau, this man insisted. He confirmed the fact that everybody coming to work from other areas of Indonesia needed to have a sponsor in the Riau Archipelago. According to him, many Minangkabau tried to migrate to the Riau Archipelago by pretending to be Malays in order to find a local sponsor. They could then migrate easily to Malaya. He added that there were no such problems when the administrative centre was in Tanjungpinang, but things changed the moment the administrative centre was relocated to Pekanbaru, on mainland Riau, due to the annexing of the Riau Archipelago to Riau Province. According to him, most of the Malays who originated from North Sumatra and who proclaimed themselves 'Rokan Malays' were, in reality, Minangkabau and not Malay.

Ethnic sentiments as an obstacle to economic achievement

Since ethnic affiliation in Riau is constructed along kinship lines, it is common to meet young educated Malays who refuse to assert their Malay identity. The centres of power referred to earlier, if important for reaffirming and conserving one's sense of Malayness, are nevertheless well known for their lack of

economic activities and their financial dependency on outsiders (usually relatives). Young educated Malays tend to reconstruct their personhood according to non primordialist logic, blaming both ethnic and traditional sentimentalities for the 'backwardness' of their parents. One of the most interesting points is that a fairly large proportion of these educated youth are themselves members of the aristocracy, which means that they do not question their ethnic affiliation but consider ethnic sentiments inoperative—even counterproductive—where class mobility is concerned.

In Baloi Central on Pulau Batam, a group of young educated Malays have started their own business. They prepare and sell seafood meals for the neighbours, who patronize them regularly. Their argument about this business is encapsulated in the idea of presenting their food stall not as a means of survival, but as a hobby, which may result in a joint venture and, eventually, in the opening of a restaurant in the busy business district. They are five partners in their twenties and early thirties and all work during the day in the private sector, in the banking and computer industry. The private sector is much more compelling to them than the public sector. The latter is associated with stagnation and Malayness. One member of the group mentioned: 'One of the major problems with Malays, was that they were always seeking civil servant positions, such as in customs or immigration, while the Chinese and the Javanese were going into private business.'

The five depict themselves as entrepreneurs and argue that entrepreneurship will be the only real way to restore the regional economy. They allege that Malays working in government services got their jobs with the assistance of family members who were already in the government. They describe Malays as having no initiative, lazy and opportunistic. They hold the view that even the Minangkabau are more willing to get a share of the economy since most of them are getting involved in petty business, such as selling food or driving taxis. According to them, venturing into business is a new phenomenon among Malays, their parents were not interested in business. One mentioned that the Riau Islands are rich in natural resources, and it is partly the fault of Malays if others take advantage of their own homeland. 'Only if local people are willing to forget about the history and the Malay *adat* and take business risks will the new province succeed economically.'

What is particularly striking is that their Malayness is looked upon as an obstacle to their achievement. According to them, Malayness is synonymous all over Indonesia with backwardness and indolence. It is only by reinforcing their *Indonesian* identity that these new entrepreneurs can find enough self-confidence to strive for a share of the economic market. This group of young entrepreneurs in Batam draws the boundary between themselves and the Minangkabau not so much in terms of ethnic categorization, but in terms of class division—between the new, educated and business-minded Indonesian from a Malay background—and the illiterate 'money seeker' and unscrupulous transmigrant. Interestingly these members of the younger generation of Malays,

who downplay their Malayness, appear to agree with these 'unscrupulous migrants' or business competitors, many of whom are migrants from other parts of Indonesia—a high proportion being from Minangkabau. 'Malays are lazy, shy, incapable of conducting business and succeeding in making money,' a migrant from Minangkabau, who operates a travel agency in Tanjungpinang, told me. Potential and abilities, for younger Malays, continue to be shaped according to ideas about the land and group of origin, even though these two components are also known to be easily manipulated and transformed through the invention of one's own family historical trajectory. Nevertheless, these younger Malays demonstrate a strong confidence in the possibility of regaining control of the local economy. This confidence seems to rely much less on political influence than was the case for their parents.

Conclusion

I have tried to demonstrate, with the help of case studies, that Malayness in the Riau Archipelago remains largely based on genealogical affinities with Malay royalty. Members of the aristocracy are still referred to as the 'real Malays', although the Malays of the neighbouring nation-states of Malaysia and Singapore have had their ethnicity reorganized in terms of contextualized membership. Social differences still prevail between aristocrats and commoners. There is still a strong sentiment among the aristocrats that the Malay commoners are Islamicized *Orang Laut* descendants or transmigrants who have merged into the Malay population since the territorial division and ethnic classification by the Dutch. This sentiment is shared by Malays who do not have any written genealogy. In fear of being marginalized by new political developments, Malay commoners tend to secure their membership to Malayness by inferring relations of kin with members of the Malay sultanates. As I have tried to demonstrate with these examples, being Malay is in itself a process of mediation, where personal and ancestral trajectories interact endlessly with territorial, social and moral boundaries.

The emerging generation of young, educated Malay urban dwellers try to break away from this schema by repressing their Malayness and associating themselves with nationalistic identities. They describe themselves as Indonesians first, although a large proportion of the more educated Malays are recognized officially as coming from an aristocratic background. The irony in this case is that, while the process of decentralization is taking place in Indonesia, these young, middle-class urban dwellers regard ethnic awareness as an obstacle to achievement. It would, however, be misleading to say that Riau Malays engage themselves in different processes that lead to antagonistic constructions of personhood. In all the cases, both projects of regional autonomy and reorganization of provincial boundaries compel the Riau Islanders to locate themselves in relation to a locally based hierarchy of power. However, the adherence to or rejection of this structure does not depend solely on one's family

history since, as we have seen, personal reconstructions of the past allow individuals to challenge the hierarchical positions imposed on them by others. This choice is mainly subject to the growing pressure to take a stand between favouring primordialistic sentiments and advocating a pluralistic system of values at the regional level of political power.

Notes

1 In this paper I will focus mostly on the Kepri and Karimun Islands, with some references to Batam.
2 My own translation.
3 Between then and early 2004 two more *kabupaten* have been created out of the former Kepri Kabupaten: Kabupaten Lingga and more recently Kabupaten Natuna. As at mid-2004 the Riau Archipelago is divided into four regencies. This paper is, however, concerned especially with the *kabupaten* of Kepri and Karimun.
4 There is a high probability that the seat of the Kepri Province will be located on Batam, at least for one year, before being moved later on to Pulau Bintan.
5 At the time of writing, Huzrin Hood has been placed under city arrest.

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9
Creating cultural identity in an era of regional autonomy[1]
Reinventing Manggarai?

Maribeth Erb, Romanus Beni and Wilhelmus Anggal

Introduction

Right on the heels of cries for *reformasi* that saw the end of President Suharto's 32-year reign, the next President Yusuf Habibie started formulating policies that would address the dissatisfaction of many of Indonesia's people, especially those residing outside of the 'centre', in regions that felt in varying ways neglected or exploited by New Order policy. The main way to address this dissatisfaction was through laws that would create what has come to be known as 'regional autonomy', *otonomi daerah*. Not a new idea, but an idea that has taken a particular shape in the context of post-New Order Indonesia, 'regional autonomy' has been encoded in two laws, amendments to the constitution, that map out the guarantee of political and fiscal autonomy. These two new laws, however, are quite vague in their implementation and, as Bell states, the relationship between these two laws, and many other already existing laws, has yet to be addressed (2001:11). The vagueness and ambiguity of the laws has led to many different ideas and interpretations of what *otda* (an acronym for *otonomi daerah*) will mean, both for people living in the *daerah,* as well as those living outside of their regions of origin.

In this chapter we want to address some of the different understandings of *otonomi,* as it is interpreted by people in different places and different positions in Indonesia. Our focus will be on people who live or originate from a fairly insignificant and often forgotten area of Indonesia, the province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT), and more specifically in the regency *(kabupaten)* of Manggarai, the western third of the island of Flores.[2] By focusing on the insignificant, we hope to bring out some issues that have not often entered discussions about autonomy in Indonesia at the present moment. These issues include: the varying meaning of 'autonomy' from different perspectives and different levels, as well as different places in Indonesia, even for the same 'ethnic' group; and the impact of the question of autonomy on ideas about 'culture' and 'identity'. We will suggest that from one perspective there is what appears to be a major 'paradigm shift' going on in Indonesia. The New Order emphasis on 'national culture' and 'nation building', through various draconian

means to create citizens out of the disparate populations of Indonesia, is starting to give way to a redefining of culture from the point of view of the regions.

This appears to be a process by which local communities and local cultural groups are empowered to rethink and re-imagine what culture and community means to them. On the other hand it can be argued from another perspective that this is not really a shift at all, that decentralization and the move to the regions of a certain amount of decision making, plus some fiscal and cultural autonomy, only means that the New Order paradigm of 'national culture' and 'national identity', has been refocused at a regional level, and that the real local communities, the *masyrakat adat* (often translated as 'indigenous peoples', see Li 2001), are still not being given the kind of autonomy that they desire, to design and arrange their own culture and communities. It can therefore be argued, as Bowen (1984) did for the concept of *gotong royong* (self-help) as a national ideology, that autonomy is understood differently at different levels, and that there is a 'misrecognition' (Bourdieu 1977) of the meaning of autonomy, by actors at different levels. This makes it possible for different people to talk about 'autonomy', but mean different things by it. During the New Order in Indonesia, there were a number of concepts that were rather hegemonic, and the slippage of understanding was at times an advantage for local villagers; however in the case of the 'autonomy era', in which villagers are supposed to gain, the slippage of meaning, it is argued, is to their disadvantage.

A question of identity

> 'Identity' owes the attention it attracts and the passion it begets to being a surrogate of community…[it] sprouts on the graveyard of communities, but flourishes thanks to its promise to resurrect the dead.
>
> Bauman (2001:128–9)

What we want to argue in this chapter is that regional autonomy has made the issue of cultural identity a particularly important one for some people, especially those who are living outside of their communities of origin. As has been argued by a number of authors, 'identity' is something that only becomes an issue in the modern state. As Handler (1994:28–9) argues, for example, there is a:

> widespread theory of culture and society that underpins a globally hegemonic nationalist ideology. In this perspective, nations are imagined as natural objects or things in the real world. As such,…as natural things they have a unique identity, and that identity can be defined by reference to precise spatial, temporal, and cultural boundaries.

This recent hegemonic ideology pretends to have great antiquity, as shown by Anderson (1991 [1983])—history is re-written and time re-imagined—but in fact it is quite recent. Handler scours the anthropological literature and novels of early modern Europe to show that ideas about personhood and community are not predicated on ideas of the bounded, individual self, let along the bounded, homogenous community (sharing a common 'identity') that persists over time. Instead some 'pre-modern' notions of personhood are based on ideas of hierarchy (see Dumont 1980), inter-relatedness and participation (mutually 'participating' in different parts of personhood with others). In other words people are not conceived of as 'individuals', individuated persons, divisible from the various social relations of which they are apart (Handler 1994:30–7). Handler argues that the 'individual', a concept that has developed in Western philosophy and has become the foundation of the modern state, underlies modern Western notions of collectivity.

> That is, collectivities…are imagined as though they are human individuals writ large. The attributes of boundedness, continuity, uniqueness, and homogeneity that are ascribed to human persons are ascribed as well to social groups.
>
> Handler (1994:33)

We argue here, as have other scholars (for example, Benjamin 1988), that in the post-colonial nation-states, the idea of the 'individuated person', cut off from land and kin, is an important pre-requisite for shaping modern citizens, and that the idea of the person, particularly among the urban, highly nationalized and educated citizens of Indonesia, is one very much modelled on this 'globally hegemonic nationalist identity' (Handler 1994:28).

Bauman has gone even further in his arguments about 'identity'. He suggests that not only does the idea of 'identity' emerge only in the modern state and within modern philosophies of individualism, where the modern person becomes responsible for 'creating her/himself—being in fact the very underpinning of 'modernity'—but 'identity' politics are a surrogate for the security and confidence that 'real' community could furnish (Bauman 2001:129). Hence 'identity sprouts on the graveyard of communities' (ibid:129). In what Bauman calls 'liquid modernity' (2001:125), not only the *placement* that persons have in society melts and shifts—status no longer being guaranteed, for example, by birth —but also the *places*—since the neo-liberal economic context leaves everyone uncertain about any kind of security. The shifting grounds of late modernity (or post-modernity) can perhaps include the kind of shifting and melting that is taking place in Indonesia at the moment. Certain 'placement' was already rearranged by New Order policies of land reform and education, which created different ways for people to become persons and achieve status. But the 'places' that people can hold now in regional autonomy Indonesia are becoming very much more uncertain.

It is for this reason, we suggest, that 'identity' has taken on an importance of far greater magnitude than it had in New Order Indonesia, where it could arguably be said to have been created. We thus contend that regional autonomy has brought to the fore the issue of cultural identity in a very important way, because of the sense of insecurity that this new political situation has created for some people in Post-New Order Indonesia. This is especially true for those who are residing in a place that is different from their perceived place of origin, their supposed 'community'.

One of the ways, it has been argued, that national identities get created and solidified is through the 'inventing of traditions', a now classic argument proposed by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983). We suggest that this paradigm is even more apt in regional autonomy Indonesia than it was in New Order Indonesia, because of the new emphasis on localities and the 'unique' cultures associated with them. We shall look at how certain events have shifted and been reinvented to take on a different kind of importance as cultural rituals, and claims of cultural identity. Part of this invention is a continuation of the inventions, during the New Order, of 'family', 'community' and 'tradition', all meant to reflect the basis, even a supposedly 'primordial' basis, of Indonesian life. Use of family imagery (Heryanto 1994; Suryakusuma 1996) and community participation (Bowen 1986) were supposedly reflective of an underlying 'Indonesian' reality, but were in fact tools of control to shape and exploit people. The images of the family that were used in the New Order were meant to control, but also had a major effect of restructuring the way that families were actually run, and hence also the way 'tradition' at the level of the village and the family operated. This use of the family was the invention of an image and a metaphor that would legitimatize violence and oppression, fear and exploitation, by keeping it 'all in the family'. Now, we argue, the same thing is potentially happening at the present moment during the move toward *otonomi*. Potentially, depending on the level of action, a similar kind of invention is taking place that is attempting to penetrate, as 'autonomy', to the level of the village. Hence what is claimed to be a 'bottom-up' *adat* (cultural) revival is actually coming from the top, and it is questionable whether the people most concerned are really being consulted.

In Hobsbawm and Ranger's text (1983), a number of examples were given to show that what often is taken to be tradition is in fact a quite recent invention. As Hobsbawm describes 'invented traditions' in his introduction to that collection, they tend to occur most frequently 'when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which "old" traditions had been designed' (1983a:4). Clearly this is relevant to not just the formation of nation-states in Europe during the time period that they are examining in their book (1870–1914), but also the forming of post-colonial nation-states.[3] As Hobsbawm defines them, 'invented' traditions are a set of practices meant to create ties with the past, implying their continuity from a time out of mind (1983a:1). Their repetitious nature, tending to be rather static and restricted, differentiates them

from what he calls true 'custom', which is in fact very malleable and changeable, necessarily so, since it is part of the very fabric of life and hence must be flexible (1983a:2). In an influential paper written shortly after this, Acciaioli (1985) argues that *adat* in village Indonesia, an unself-conscious part of the social life of individuals (what Hobsbawm calls 'custom'), changed its place and function during the New Order. It became something to be displayed, something to be adhered to in a particular way, and something that one became highly self-conscious about.

Certainly this process has been going on in Indonesia, and specifically in Manggarai, for some time, the process of 'culture' becoming 'art', or 'custom' becoming 'tradition'. During the New Order in Manggarai, under *Bupati* Fransiskus Lega (1967–78) a great deal of attention was paid to Manggaraian culture and *adat*. Attempts were made to ally it with 'national culture', but at the same time to stake it out as a culture in its own right. What is perhaps unique at the present moment is the emphasis on the local, as opposed to the centre, which gives a different place to *adat* and tradition.

Most relevant in this is Hobsbawm's discussion in his concluding article in the 1983 collection, where he points out that the invention of traditions happened at a particularly rapid rate in one period in European history, 'the thirty or forty years before the First World War' (1983b:263). The reason for this was the 'widespread progress of electoral democracy and the consequent emergence of mass politics' (1983b:267–8). Hence there was a spread of 'liberal constitution institutions' (268) wherein the 'masses could not be relied upon to follow their masters'. Hobsbawm claims that those in power—the middle classes and the rulers—had 'rediscovered the importance of "irrational" elements in the maintenance of the social fabric and the social order' (ibid), and hence ritual, moulded on tradition, had to be used to garner mass support and loyalty.

We suggest here that similar political changes are occurring in Indonesia at the moment; the move to giving greater political and economic autonomy to the 'regions' is a move toward giving greater political power to the masses. They will be given the right of a direct vote in the upcoming election, and cannot be relied upon to vote in a particular way. It becomes necessary, therefore, to look at how tradition gets viewed and invented by those living in the regions. Additionally, however, it is important to examine how traditions are manipulated and manufactured by those hailing from different regions, but living in the centre, who harbour aspirations for political and economic gain in their home territories, to where a considerable amount of political power is devolving during this time of regionalization.

A time of radical change

> We are going to have to rewrite our history; we never realized how much we had been duped.

A teacher, Labuan Bajo, Manggarai, Flores, June 1999

> That our individuality is socially produced is by now a trivial truth, but the obverse of that truth needs to be repeated more often; the shape of our sociality, and so of the society we share, depends in its turn on the way in which the task of 'individualism' is framed up and responded to.
>
> Bauman 2001:124

The authors of this chapter were all struck by the rapidity of change in Manggarai, after the fall of Suharto, the *Krisis Moneter* (*krismon* or monetary crisis), and the onset of *reformasi* in the 1998–2000 period. Despite some hardships that were experienced during this time—felt more severely by shop owners, business people and civil servants—*reformasi* was generally received positively. This was especially so for Manggaraian farmers, to whom *krismon* was interpreted not as a negative thing, but wholly positive. This is because it was *krismon* that caused prices of cash crops, especially coffee, to jump to unprecedented levels, such that large numbers of farmers were able to afford objects they had never dreamed they would be able to purchase, such as VCRs, TVs, VCD players, satellite dishes etc. The major influx of mass communication technology into the Manggaraian villages meant they were opened up to national and world events as never before. As the 1999 elections approached, some joked that the farmers were looking forward to a change of president again, since coffee prices seemed to go up with presidential change.

In our discussions with people in Manggarai in the period after the fall of Suharto, we were impressed by the mental shift that had taken place in the Manggaraian world view. People started to express their scepticism and criticism of the former government and spoke about things that they had kept silent about for decades. One man who had been a nursing student in Maumere (Eastern Flores) in 1965–66 related the horrors of his experience of having to aid the military in exterminating 'communists', after the so-called 'communist coup attempt' of 30 September 1965. In addition to discussions of long silenced memories of government violence and oppression, people were starting to complain about the inequities of the centralized system of government. People who had been to Java for schooling or work started to complain about Javanese attitudes toward other ethnic groups and the Java-centric views prevalent in the education system and in the general running of the nation. In general people were searching and people were talking. Certainly an unprecedented openness filled the air, as well as the start of a feeling of major discontent that somehow Suharto's government had robbed them of certain rights, certain possibilities, the ability to control and direct their own lives and livelihood.

It would be incorrect to give the impression that there had not been discontent expressed earlier, especially in the later years of the New Order. As had been happening throughout Indonesia, but especially emanating from the centre, there

had been growing dissatisfaction with the grip of the Suharto family on so many aspects of economic and political life in Indonesia, and with the perceived rampant corruption of the Suharto government. News of student protests in Jakarta and other more lively educational centres of Indonesia, had been brought to even the most remote (in communication terms) parts of Indonesia through the networks of students themselves, who came from all over Indonesia, along with anger, suspicion and cries for change. As Heryanto wrote in the mid-1990s, despite its economic success, the culture of fear and oppression that had kept Indonesia 'stable' since the massacres of 1965–66 was starting to wear thin as a legitimate political strategy, most particularly in the early 1990s (1996:241).

At the same time that events that Heryanto relates were taking place in Jakarta in the early 1990s—such as mass rallies of workers protesting abuse of their rights and lawsuits by NGOs against the government—there were also rumblings on the ground in Manggarai. These rumblings were primarily in the shape of land wars, conflicts over land both between neighbouring and related villages and between villages and various institutions of the government, which they started to accuse of taking away their land at some point in the past without proper compensation. Both the quality and quantity of conflicts over land rose in the early 1990s, such that the *bupati* of the time, Drs. Gaspar Eco, felt it necessary to call in a sociological expert to help him come up with a solution to these land conflicts (Lawang 1999:2–3). However, neither the research process nor the solutions suggested stopped these conflicts over land, which escalated even more in the later 1990s after the fall of Suharto. We are suggesting that there was a continuity between these earlier struggles and cries for justice and the later more aggressive calls for *reformasi,* but that there was also clearly a qualitative change with the end of the New Order. This qualitative change meant people could really rethink and start to consider rewriting the past, its events and its effect on the peoples of Indonesia.

Contemplating the need to 'rewrite history' had to do with the awareness of how much manipulation of events there had been in the political and public discourse. This awareness extended to a criticism of how much government policy had affected their lives. As hinted at above, in Manggarai, where most people gain at least part if not all of their livelihood from the land, much of this criticism was directed at various policies that had affected land use and ownership. The basic agrarian law no. 5/1960 had given control over the land to the government, when and if they needed, basically disenfranchising the local people.[4] Various policies over subsequent years, such as the law no. 5/1979 that restructured village government, and the constant attempts to get villagers to move out of their hilltop village settlements down to more accessible locations on a main path or road, reorganized village life and community relations in rather drastic ways. As one Manggaraian villager, now involved in sporadic displays of Manggaraian culture for tourist groups, said to one of the authors:

> The government buried our culture when they moved us down to the road, and made us give up our *lingko* (indigenous form of agriculture).

In the Manggaraian regency, therefore, the sentiment that the government had somehow killed off and reshaped Manggaraian culture beyond recognition has been emerging as a stronger and stronger feeling in the post-Suharto era, as people start to move into a time when they are supposed to be 'autonomous', taking responsibility for themselves. However the idea of autonomy for people in Manggarai does not have entirely positive associations. Local level NGOs (we prefer to call them LSMs—*Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat*), have struggled to describe to villagers what *otonomi* actually means, and should mean in the coming years, for them. They related to one of the authors how the attempt to use the expression, *wintuk ru*—'to do it yourself, to be responsible for yourself'—has actually been received rather negatively in Manggaraian villages. This is similar to the expression *kilo koe*—'a small family'—implying that a particular family only attends to itself and does not enter into interdependent relationships with other families. People argue that, in fact, many of the land conflicts that have occurred in recent Manggaraian history have been precisely because people have been thinking 'autonomously', that is thinking only of themselves and their 'small families' and not of the wider network of relationships within and beyond the community that give them certain rights, but demand certain obligations, and also place them quite specifically into a particular status.

We suggest that New Order Indonesia, as much as it shaped citizens, also shaped 'individuals', people whose relationship to their community and their 'culture' was actualized in dramatically different ways. In other papers, one of the authors has written about this process as a 'pulling of the drum out of the village' (Erb 200 la; 2001b), a process where people came to look at their culture as an object, separated from themselves, instead of a part of themselves. This same process disentangled people from a definition of self based on kinship relations and community. People became 'individuated', a process common in the formation of citizens both in the European colonizing world of the 'age of nationalism'—where Hobsbawm says that 'State, nation and society converged', 'the intrusive state' becoming 'the framework of citizens' collective actions' (1983:264–5)—and the world of the post-colonies—where the 'Overzelf' loomed large and in a much shorter and more draconian process realigned the 'identities' of the 'nation's' persons (Benjamin 1988). It is because people now think of themselves as 'individuals', instead of 'participating persons' (Handler 1994), that land conflicts are so difficult to resolve in Manggarai. It is also the reason that 'autonomy' takes on multiple, sometimes contradictory meanings in the Manggaraian social world.

What *otonomi* means to varying people within the Manggaraian community, both in Jakarta, Ruteng (the capital of the Manggarai regency[5]) and in the villages in Manggarai, how it is expected to work out in practice, and what people are doing because of their interpretations of autonomy, will be explored in

the next sections of this chapter. What needs to be stated at this point is that because of major reshaping of Manggaraian (and other Indonesian) culture and *adat* during the Suharto era, and the present moment that looks to the region as a new centre of focus, it is this moment that is especially ripe for major reworking, reflection on and inventing of 'tradition' and history.

In this chapter we will use three examples, coming from different places and levels of Manggaraian 'society', to explore how Manggaraian culture and tradition is being invented for the political and economic aspirations of some Manggaraian people. Our first look will be at Jakarta, and the forming of an organization especially meant to promote Manggaraian culture in Jakarta, as well as in Manggarai, and to forge close ties with the Manggaraian homeland. We will also look at a ritual that they were instrumental in organizing, first at Taman Mini (a cultural park) in Jakarta, and then when they brought the 'ritual' to Ruteng, the capital of Manggarai some months later. We will then look at how this ritual was received in Ruteng by various people in the capital, especially those involved in other organizations (LSMs) dedicated to improving life in the villages and in various under-privileged locations in Manggarai. Part of the concern of this ritual event in Ruteng was to discuss the changing circumstances of Manggaraian life, the difficulties people have had, and what role culture should have in people's lives. There was much attention paid to what role government would have and how government could be redefined and reshaped to suit 'traditional' Manggaraian village life.

We will then look at how village life is being reshaped within the context of regional autonomy in Manggarai. How are these ideas of traditional Manggaraian political and social forms, that is Manggaraian 'culture', being fitted into the structure of regional autonomy? We will query whether there really is a new paradigm that is being shaped for culture and society in the regional autonomy era, or whether it is really the New Order writ small, reproduced on a level and in a way that is now couched in a different language, but is actually the same thing. It will then be necessary to ask the question, what is in fact 'autonomy'? Had it been redesigned under Suharto's New Order to be an emphasis on the individual (in fact the common reshaping of persons under modern nation-states, as Handler, Benjamin, Bauman and Hobsbawm suggest)? When people now talk about 'autonomy' do they automatically think not of a village, or a region, but of themselves? The ambiguity of these issues at various levels of Manggaraian society make it still a contested issue of how 'autonomy' will work, especially for people in the villages, whom the new laws are expected to empower.

Manggaraians in Jakarta

People from Manggarai, Western Flores, have been arriving in Jakarta since the time of the slave trade in the seventeenth century (Coolhaas 1942). Such large numbers were exported as slaves that there was a separate part of Batavia called 'Manggarai' (Toda 1999:107). Two of the authors have referred elsewhere to

this as one of the Manggaraian 'diasporas', out of their homeland, in this case one forced by the slave trade (Beni and Anggal 2001).

A far greater number of Manggaraian people migrated away from Manggarai, however, during the New Order. Most of them went to Jakarta because of the policies of the centralization era (what two of the authors have called 'hyper-centralization', Beni and Anggal 2001) that pushed people to the centre where far more opportunities existed for education, work and political advancement. Over time the numbers have grown, both of those born to migrants, as well as those who migrated, and the activities they have fostered to keep in contact with one another have multiplied as well. It must be remembered that most Manggaraians, unlike the majority of Indonesians, are Catholic. Thus the need to foster activities that could unite them in their religious identity was also an additional motivation for gathering. Although it is true that in Jakarta and elsewhere outside of the province of NTT, people do gather according to multiple affiliations of origin, such as *Orang Timor*—people from the East (meaning the eastern provinces, especially NTT)—specific regency origin and same language affiliation is still a very strong basis for special kinds of assistance and association.

When they first arrived in Jakarta, the Manggaraian immigrants tended to associate with one another most often in smaller groups, such as those based on clan *(wau)* or origin village *(beo)* affiliation, or sub-district *(kecamatan)* origin. Jakartan Manggaraians also tended to associate more frequently with those in similar professions or those residing in nearby districts in Jakarta. However in the late 1970s, a number of Jakartan Manggaraians created an association to attempt to unite the disparate groups of Manggaraians, so they could keep up ties with other Manggaraians living and working in Jakarta. This association is called IKAMADA—*Ikatan Keluarga Manggarai Djakarta* (The Association of Jakartan Manggaraian Families). It was IKAMADA that created the Manggarai Cup, a football competition, enthusiastically followed by Jakartan Manggaraians.

IKAMADA also organized gatherings at Christmas/New Year *(Natal dan Tahun Baru bersama),* sometimes referred to as *penti* (a ritual done at the end of the old agricultural year, and before the new planting in many Manggaraian villages). However, this yearly gathering was never specifically conceived of as a 'cultural' event, but instead as a social (or religious) one. Manggaraians who gathered would sing Christmas and other songs, often in the main Manggaraian dialect.[6] A mass would most often be the first event on the programme, followed by singing and a meal, and then a night full of dancing. None of this was organized as a Manggaraian ritual event would be. These were not *adat* masses, nor was the dancing afterwards presented as, or organized as Manggaraian dances. There also were never *caci* competitions, the Manggaraian whip games, often held at *penti* new year rituals in Manggarai itself. Perhaps it was never seen as an appropriate thing to do by the earlier migrants to Jakarta, since *caci* has its magical and spiritual associations which clearly link it with the harvest, with fertility, with the traditional village altar *(compang)* and the whole cosmological

complex that links the village and its surrounding agricultural land (*gendang one, lingko pean*—'the drums on the inside, the ritual fields on the outside').[7]

It was similarly so with the Manggaraian Cup competition. These were not conceived of in any way as having cultural associations. Football, in the villages of Manggarai, has been promoted by the missionary priests for many decades as an appropriate entertainment activity during the Christmas and Easter celebrations. Villagers from the surrounding parish villages—sometimes many hours' walk away—would camp out in the parish centre during Christmas and Easter week. Football competitions would liven the atmosphere of these occasions; footballs were initially provided by the foreign missionary priests, before Manggaraian villagers had access to or could afford such items. Football competitions, therefore, had become a very ingrained part of Manggaraian social life, and Jakartan Manggaraians revived this activity for social and entertainment purposes in the late 1970s. Initially based on competition between sub-districts of origin in Manggarai, subsequently the competitions have also been based on district of residence in Jakarta. What is quite important to mention here, is that in the 1999 and 2000 competitions, for the first time, Manggaraian cultural events were introduced by the organizing committee at the final playoff games. *Danding* (ritual dances) and *caci* (whip competitions) were displayed at various points throughout the day. The instruments for playing *caci* were brought from Manggarai especially for this occasion. It was the first time that *caci* had been played outside of Manggarai.

Quite consonant with this, and at the same time—in the later part of 1999, the year of the creation of the regional autonomy laws—some Jakartan Manggaraians started plans to form a new Manggaraian association called the *Yayasan Van Bekkum*—The Van Bekkum Foundation. This foundation was formed to 'remember the work of the late Msg. van Bekkum who had done so much to promote the culture and well-being of the people of Manggarai'.[8] The aims of the foundation were to promote cultural awareness, as well as to stimulate the development and improvement of the Manggaraian population. In their official opening ceremony in Jakarta in 2000, the organizers announced their plans to help poor Manggaraians in their homeland. Their plan was to offer scholarships for Manggaraian youth who could not afford higher education, so that they would be able to pursue further studies in universities outside Flores. For the first time, at that opening ceremony, the question of culture was brought to the forefront. The stage, on which first a mass was held and then later a cultural show, was decorated with a picture of a Manggaraian *adat* house *(mbaru gendang)* with its characteristic round shape and roof finial of a head with buffalo horns. A brief display of *caci* was put on, as well as Manggaraian *danding* that are performed at *penti* rituals.

We are arguing that the formation of the *Yayasan van Bekkum* in 1999 was not a coincidence, but instead the organizers had a number of specific intentions in mind. Some of the people involved in organizing the Van Bekkum Foundation had individually been involved in helping their own particular village or district

before the rise of the Van Bekkum Foundation.[9] But never had efforts of this kind been done to specifically encompass all of Manggarai. This idea of encompassing all of Manggarai had particular benefits for a number of the Van Bekkum organizers, who could see, given the move toward regional autonomy, the opportunities available for them, either politically or economically, if they could gain the general support of the populations in the Manggaraian regency. Hence we are arguing in this instance that culture is a strategy, that the formation of a pan-Manggaraian cultural identity will benefit those who want to be received in all of Manggarai as if they were a native daughter/son, with special privileges and considerations.[10]

How is *otonomi* understood in Jakarta among Jakartan Manggaraians? The position, work and status of Manggaraians in Jakarta is varied, and clearly there is much variety in their understanding of regional autonomy, depending on who they are, what they do, and whether they see any opportunity in these new laws. Many, in fact, see it as only a government problem of organizing administration, civil servants and fiscal restructuring in the region (including their own *kabupaten* Manggarai), and feel that it does not really affect them too much. Two groups of people have some fear that regional autonomy will displace them from Jakarta and that they will lose their work or residence because of these new laws. One of these is civil servants, since there have been some cases of civil servants being relocated to the region from which they originated and many difficulties have arisen out of this. So far this has not affected any Jakartan Manggaraians, since few Manggaraians have civil service posts in Jakarta, but it creates a considerable amount of anxiety among civil servants that regional autonomy means a new kind of exclusionism that will make it difficult for people to work or gain opportunities in places outside their own region.

The second group comprises those Manggaraian immigrants who live in Jakarta but have not yet received a Jakartan residential permit. Some of them work in informal sector, semi-illegal jobs, such as selling pornographic VCDs. Normally the KTP (*kartu tanda penduduk* or residential identity card) should be applied for and obtained officially, but one must have a *surat pindah,* a 'change of residence letter' from one's own region, which only will be issued if the individual has a valid reason for leaving their home region (study, work etc.). Many people leave Manggarai, however, without a clear goal in mind. Some take up factory work or some kind of formal sector work in Jakarta, or elsewhere, or enter an educational institution; some, however, remain 'underground'. It is possible for them to get a KTP in a semi-legal manner, by paying a few hundred thousand rupiah at the appropriate office. However, those who do not have official work feel particularly vulnerable. All of these 'illegal' residents of Jakarta have fears that regional autonomy will mean that at some point the local government in Jakarta will rule that only people who are 'Jakartan citizens' will be able to live and work there, and they will then lose their jobs or find it impossible to obtain a job in the formal sector.

There are a smaller group of Manggaraians in Jakarta who constitute the 'elite': these are those involved in business activities, those who hold academic posts, and those who have many important political connections, but not the popular base of support to realize their political ambitions. These people have a particular idea of what regional autonomy can do for them, and how they potentially can take advantage of it. Their problem has always been the smallness, the remoteness and the lack of opportunity in their homeland to gain economically or politically. For them, regional autonomy means a location that they can legitimately exploit (their own homeland), but the benefit of doing so is still being sought. What kind of economic enterprises would be worthwhile in Manggarai? Regional autonomy to them means that if, for example, 'foreign' investors were encouraged to participate in ventures in Manggarai, as native daughters and sons they would have the right to push these programmes, and would have the right, legally, politically and fiscally, to benefit from them without fear of losing all of their hard earned rewards to central government manoeuvrings—as was the case during the New Order.

Already there has been a book published by the 'Committee to Develop Manggarai Regency' *(Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah Kabupaten Manggarai),* together with the Centre of Business Information and Promotion *(Pusat Informasi Bisnisdan Promosi Indonesia)* in Jakarta, on investment prospects in Manggarai that include tourism, agro-business, mining and fishing opportunities (BPPDKM 2000). This has been a planned cooperation between various people in Jakarta and political players in Manggarai. In various ways, then, a number of elite and powerful Manggaraians in Jakarta have been working on their links to Manggarai both economically and politically, attempting to secure a future base of operations for themselves.

Our suggestion is that the main actors in the Van Bekkum Foundation, who indeed constitute a certain number of these political and economic elites in Jakarta, have emphasized 'culture' as the mission of the Foundation for precisely these political and economic reasons. Culture is their key to Manggarai. But as Bauman suggests, 'identity' sprouts on the graveyard of community. The link that Jakartans have with real communities in Manggarai is very tenuous. Many Manggaraian migrants have married people who are not Manggaraian. Perhaps a third of those who follow the activities of the Manggaraian associations were born in Jakarta. Of those who migrated to Jakarta, many attempt to return and visit, keeping up ties with family, but this is often done at intervals that are few and far between. Quite a number of these migrants left their home village at a very early age. A few decades ago the choice of primary and secondary schooling in Manggarai was very limited; most who could afford to go beyond primary school went to Ruteng. This meant that at an early age they spent much of their time away from their village, living in school dormitories and not participating in the cultural, ritual and social life of their natal village. Those who live in Jakarta, on the whole, had their foundation education in Ruteng and, more often than not, went to Java for their tertiary education.[11]

Hence, many Jakartan Manggaraians, in the emerging era of autonomy, have come to realize that they do not know Manggaraian culture and that their basis for association with the general populace of Manggarai is very thin. It is thus that we are suggesting that creating the idea of a 'Manggaraian identity' is something that is particularly important for them; it is a way by which they hope to find a common ground of association with Manggaraians in Manggarai.

What has been very interesting about this process is how it gets presented to Manggaraians in Manggarai, and how it is received by them. The Jakartan elite of the Van Bekkum Foundation have presented themselves as the ones reviving Manggaraian culture, through the efforts of their foundation. They have followed the lead of the local government in Ruteng—which indeed has very close ties with these elites—of blaming the problems in Manggarai (most especially land conflicts) on the loss of Manggaraian culture. Hence they have managed to present their efforts as very timely, as very important, as rescuing Manggarai from the horrible deterioration of cultural loss and anomie of the modern world and as saving Manggarai from bad influences from the outside, at the same time reviving and revitalizing Manggaraian culture. They present themselves, therefore, in a saviour's role. How they are perceived by people in Manggarai is very variable, and will be discussed in the next section. The question is whether this culture that is being resuscitated by the Jakartan Manggaraians can become common ground for people in Manggarai, who have not felt the loss of 'culture' that the Jakartans feel, and hence think about who they are and what they do in very different ways.

***Penti* 2001**

> *Neka hemo kuni agu kalo*—Don't forget [your] origin place (the place where the umbilical cord and placenta were buried).
>
> Banner displayed in Ruteng during the *penti* 2001 festivities, June–July 2001

> This should not be called *penti*. *Penti* belongs to the *beo* (village), not to the town.
>
> Civil servant in Ruteng, Manggarai district

> People are making too much of a fuss over a word. Clearly the people from Jakarta have a different idea of what their *beo* is.
>
> DPR member from Lembor sub-district

In 2000–2001, the Van Bekkum Foundation started making plans for a great cultural event that was to take place in Ruteng in June 2001. As a foreshadowing of that event they had a major cultural display in the Nusa Tenggara Timur Exhibit at *Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (The Beautiful Indonesia Miniature

Park) in Jakarta in April. This display, which they called *'penti',* we argue was economically and politically an important prelude to the ritual to take place in Manggarai in June, which was also called *penti*. The *'penti'* in Taman Mini was arranged as a display only; to those who attended, it was carefully explained that this was not a 'real' *penti* ritual (the ritual of the new year), but only a symbol of the 'real' *penti,* which would take place in Ruteng in June. It was readily admitted that these were not real ritual events, because they were held 'not in the proper place'.

Interestingly what was included in the *'penti'* show in Taman Mini was something that has nothing to do with *penti* as a ritual event in the villages, that is a display of *podo wina*—the delivering of a new bride to her husband's home. This is a fairly colourful ritual event and is felt to be quite distinctive of Manggaraian culture. The new bride, dressed in ritual costume, is carried by a number of men into her husband's village and takes her first step in her husband's village on to an egg in the doorway to his village's ritual house.[12] Conversely, the events most central to *penti* rituals as they are done in the villages, the rituals 'inviting' the spirits of the village spring, the village altar and the village graveyard to participate in the community evening rituals and celebrations, were not even mentioned in the *'penti'* display that took place at Taman Mini.

The whole day event had three parts to it: the *podo wina* ceremony, *caci* and tales of life in the Manggaraian village (with special attention to how young men and women met, fell in love and got married). *Caci,* the whip games referred to earlier, is also a clearly colourful and distinctive Manggaraian cultural event. It was replicated from beginning to end of the ritual game sequence, including the reception of the guests at the village entrance, and the actual playing of *caci* as it is accompanied by groups of people singing and dancing on the sidelines to spur on the players. A replica of a Manggaraian house and village yard was created so that all of these activities could appear to be taking place in their proper location.

The organizer and inspiration of this cultural event at Taman Mini, Sirjohn deGaut, a film actor and great enthusiast of Manggaraian culture, kept up narratives throughout the day, explaining various different activities. In his opening speech he said:

> Already for several decades we have forgotten and therefore do not know our culture. Now, in this era of regional autonomy, we must do something for the progress of Manggaraian culture. This is one reason why we are here today. Today we are here to enjoy the performances of our own culture.[13]

In his various explanations of what was happening over the course of the day, he constantly referred to the fact that what was being seen was a 'modification', and said that this was because: 'we don't have a *beo* (village), we don't have a *compang* (village altar), or a *pa'ang* (entrance) or a *natas* (village yard) to play

caci in, hence everything must be modified'.[14] It was Sirjohn also who wrote the scripts for the skits showing the type of romantic liaisons that occur among young people in Manggaraian villages.[15]

The whole affair was put on for several audiences. A large part of the audience at the Taman Mini that day were Jakartan Manggaraians, there to see their culture on display. There were also non-Manggaraians, and clearly the explanations given had in mind an audience that was not familiar with Manggaraian culture, be they non-Manggaraians, or Manggaraians displaced from their own culture. A significant invitee to the day's events was the Minister of Tourism, who took that occasion to announce that the Komodo Dragon—Komodo Island is part of the Manggarai regency—was to be named the national tourism mascot of Indonesia. This is a major hint to us that the display of Manggaraian culture at the Taman Mini (itself a famous tourist spot, designed to be a smorgasbord of Indonesian culture, see Hitchcock 1997) was meant to repackage it in a palatable form for tourist consumption. Indeed the promotion of tourism to the Manggarai regency, and the attempt to find cultural objects of interest to tourists is a big concern now in Manggarai (see Erb 1997; 1998; 2000; 2001a; 2001b). It is clear to the authors, as was hinted above, that prospects for selling Manggarai as a tourism object are one of the possible opportunities that Jakartan Manggaraians see as open to them in this regional autonomy era. Hence, the *penti* staged in Taman Mini was, above all, to be understood as a tourism event for both local as well as foreign tourists. The way culture was presented at this event was as a consumable object, and as information for those who were uninformed, but wished to become informed, about cultural matters (see Erb 2001a).

In June 2001, this *penti* exhibition was to be 'brought' to Ruteng, an interesting imagery that resonates from Manggaraian ritual life. People often speak of 'bringing' *(podo)* a particular ritual event to a specific place that is not its place of 'origin'—such as bringing *caci* or particular kinds of ritual sacrifice into a field, which would normally be done in a village setting. In Manggaraian ritual ideology, sites become shaped over time, through ritual, so that bringing the ritual to places, and hence shaping them as appropriate sites, entails a ritual bringing that does the consecrating, so to speak. Hence 'bringing' the *penti* ritual to Ruteng, has a peculiar ring to it, given the circumstances. However it has clear precedence in Manggaraian ritual life. The implication that we read into this idea of 'bringing' *penti* to Manggarai, is that the appropriate and original site was Jakarta Taman Mini, and bringing it to another place, Ruteng, entailed doing something to make that place an additional appropriate site for the ritual. No Jakartan Manggaraian would ever state this as being the aim of this event, since they recognize that 'true' *penti* belongs to Manggarai, and to the villages, but there is a certain truth to this.

What they were bringing, we suggest, is an idea of Manggaraian cultural identity that they hoped to shape in Manggarai for their own purposes. This idea of Manggaraian identity is a pan-Manggaraian identity, which never existed

before the New Order. It is still to some extent an incomplete idea, since there is recognition of tremendous diversity of culture/*adat* and language in the Manggarai regency. In fact for some villagers in Manggarai, 'autonomy' has meant the right to speak up and make claims for their distinction and difference from central Manggarai, which has dominated the idea of Manggaraian culture and language since even before the New Order.[16] This issue did, in fact, surface during the *penti* activities in Ruteng in June.

In Ruteng itself, a great deal of controversy surrounded the plans to 'bring' *penti* from Jakarta. One thing that was controversial about it was the name under which this event was going in the early days of discussion, *penti mese*—'the great *penti*'. A *penti mese* was meant to be a *penti* done for the whole of Manggarai at one time. It was conceived of and spoken of as a 'healing' ritual for the whole Manggarai regency, which had been experiencing so many problems, particularly the escalating number of land wars both between neighbours and with the government. Village new year rituals do indeed have this element to them, where villagers talk about throwing away all of the bad things that have happened in the old year, so that people can be purged of all quarrels, bad blood and irregular actions that hurt the community and will hurt the growing crops in the new year (see Erb 1987; 1994). This great *penti* was thus clearly modelled on this idea of purging; the rhetoric was attractive and did convince some Manggaraians of its high and dignified cultural and spiritual aims.

Others, however, were far more sceptical of the underlying motives of such an event. They also disputed the cultural reality of such a thing in 'traditional' Manggaraian ritual life. '*Penti* belongs to the village, not the town,' was a sentiment expressed by quite a lot of cultural purists. There was also a considerable undercurrent of rivalry within the Manggaraian social landscape, since the place of this 'great *penti*' was to be Ruteng, the present Manggaraian capital, but historically a rather insignificant place in Manggarai. The place which could legitimately claim some right to represent the whole of Manggarai is not Ruteng, but Todo,[17] the birth village of the man who was named king under the Dutch colonial era— when Manggarai achieved a status as a region, independent of Bima on neighbouring Sumbawa, which had claimed control over Manggarai for several hundred years—and a village which had obtained a fairly powerful position even before the start of direct Dutch administration of Manggarai in 1907 (see Lawang 1989; Erb 1997; 1999).

One very strong suspicion had to do with the motivation of the present *bupati,* who considers himself, and is acknowledged by many, to be a cultural expert, being deft at *adat* speech and having written a book on Manggaraian culture (Bagul Dagur 1996).[18] It was generally felt in Ruteng that the *bupati* did not agree with the *penti mese* as presented to him by the Van Bekkum Foundation; he apparently disagreed on various cultural grounds. The original plan was to hold the *penti mese* ritual in and around the *mbaru wunut* in the centre of Ruteng town, that is the house where the one and only 'king' of Manggarai had lived, during the Dutch colonial era.[19] There were a number of immediate problems

with this. Although historically this seemed to make sense because of the pre-eminent position of this house, and the importance of its original occupant as a symbol of the unity of Manggarai, many argued that logically, according to *adat,* it did not make any sense at all.

A *beo,* a village in Manggarai, has a number of important integrated parts that point to the unified function of village life. Besides the drum house *(mbaru gendang),* which is the symbol of authority of the village where the drums, the instruments of communication with the supernatural world, are kept, every village must have its land that its members work. The communal fields in traditional Manggaraian villages, called *lingko,* were divided up in a round, pie-shaped manner among all the family units, said to be reflecting the shape of the round drum house, where all family lineages in a village also had representatives. The centre of these fields, called *lodok,* was the spiritual centre where offerings and sacrifices were made. One field's *lodok* would represent the land of the villages during each new year's ritual. The village also had its source of water *(wae),* on which life was thought to depend. But a village also had its graveyard *(boa)* where the dead, who still were thought to have a continuing relation with the living, were buried. As part of the sequence of rituals associated with *penti,* the villagers had to *barong* (invite) the spirits resident in the *lodok,* in the water source and in the graveyard to come and be united with the villagers in their ritual of renewal.

But where, a number of vocal people in Ruteng asked, would the *lodok,* the *wae* and the *boa* be that were associated with the town of Ruteng? Residents of Ruteng were associated with a number of different *beo,* or hamlets, within the town, some of which predated the construction of the town. They had their own *lodok,* their own *wae,* and usually their own *boa*. Some argued the public graveyard at Karot would serve as the *boa,* and the spring near Waso hamlet, which provided the source of tapped water for the town of Ruteng, could serve as the place from which the spirits would be invited. Apart from the impracticality of arranging a ritual that would have to travel all over the town—since the graveyard was in the north of the town and the water source in the south, way up in the mountains—there was apparently a public outcry at these suggestions. The people of Waso hamlet even threatened to axe all the pipes taking water from its spring if anyone tried to *barong* their *wae*. Despite the supposedly noble intentions of this ritual, many people were quite vehemently opposed to it.

So the *bupati* was forced to scrap these ideas and find alternatives, so the Van Bekkum Foundation could go ahead with their plans. It can be argued that though he capitulated in terms of the way the ritual was to be done, he had much to gain if it was to take place. On the one hand, the local government had not emerged unscathed by any means from the accusations of KKN that were thrown, post-Suharto, at the New Order government. Increasing numbers of Manggaraian people voiced their dissent and made claims against the local government because of actions taken during the New Order (as mentioned above). In addition there had been a strong push from several factions (in Western Manggarai, in the

provincial capital Kupang, and in Jakarta) to divide Manggarai into several *kabupaten*. The, at the time newly posted, *bupati,* rumoured to have indebted himself heavily in order to get the position, would lose much if Manggarai was fractured. The centre of Manggarai, where the administration is located, is the poorest part of the regency, noted only for its schools (in the capital) and rice fields (in Cancar). The real wealth of Manggarai lies in the east, with the lush coffee, chocolate and vanilla groves, and the great potential lies in the west, with the Komodo National Park as both a source of sea products and a tremendous pull for tourists. Hence keeping Manggarai intact, at least until the end of his term in office, seemed imperative. So by pulling off a great unifying ritual, centred on the capital of Ruteng, the increasingly fractured centre of Manggaraian authority would be back on centre stage, both politically and symbolically.[20]

Because of the protests, the Bishop of Ruteng Diocese was eventually asked to couple the *penti* celebration with the 40th anniversary of the Diocese of Ruteng. Many people in Ruteng have suggested that the government has lost all of its legitimacy, but the Church is still highly respected. So the combining of the *penti* ritual with the diocesan celebration was a way of attempting to salvage the authority of the local government and the Foundation, who were attempting to stage the *penti* celebration. Instead of calling it *penti mese,* which clearly had made people unhappy, the celebration was called *Penti Manggarai 2001*. Coupling *Penti Manggarai,* a ritual proclaiming to be a revival of *adat,* with a church celebration had its own pitfalls, however. The Church was put into the position of actively supporting an *adat* celebration that it had for years been rather ambivalent about. Certainly there has been a strong current in the Church toward 'enculturation', but what this has meant, and how it has been accomplished by various individuals, has been very varied (see Erb 2003).

The Bishop and multiple layers of his staff and clergy were put in the position of seeming to be actively supporting ritual sacrifices during the *penti* celebrations. There was some discomfort about this, but it was there, happening for all to see— and see over again, because the event was recorded by numerous reporters of various affiliations. Interestingly, the whole *penti* celebration was taken by some to be an admission by the Church that it had been wrong. One of the authors who was present heard many criticisms during the days and weeks after *Penti Manggarai 2001* that the Church had been unfair to Manggaraian religious practices in calling them *kafir* (pagan), and that, now, with the recognition of the importance of *adat,* it was clear that the Church would have to change its attitude. It did appear, as part of the overall ethos of 'reconciliation', that there was an element of apology from the Church leaders about the way Manggaraian *adat* had been categorized and treated in the past.

This has been one of the many ambiguities associated with the rise of culture in this time of *otonomi daerah*. In the past, the New Order and the Church in Manggarai seemed to be working fairly harmoniously together in discouraging profligacy and what was considered foolish superstition within the Manggarai

adat of the past. In general, because of the emphasis on 'national culture' and Catholic culture, Manggaraian culture was seen as taking a very far back seat. Its place was more as 'art' (Acciaioli 1985), as opposed to anything religious or an integrated part of village life as it had been in the past.

There were other ambiguities that emerged quite clearly in the activities that unfolded during the *Penti Manggarai 2001* celebration. The first day of the ritual was located in the village of Ruteng Pu'u (the original village of Ruteng). It eventually became Ruteng Pu'u's water, Ruteng Pu'u's fields and Ruteng Pu'u's drum house that figured in the ritual activities of the first day. However the subsequent days' activities took place in the town of Ruteng, in the central playing field, Motang Rua.[21] *Caci* was played there, split from the location where it should rightfully have taken place, the *natas* (village yard) of Ruteng Pu'u. There were many subsequent questions and criticisms that emerged about the irregularity of the ritual as it was performed in Ruteng Pu'u. People wondered, was it supposed to be a 'real' *penti* for that village? Defined as a *penti* event, in the context of a 'cultural show', many people could accept it. However as a *penti* ritual it was highly irregular. There were many that hinted at possible dangerous repercussions for the residents of that village.[22] Interestingly, it will be remembered that, in Jakarta, the *penti* in Ruteng was being advertised as a 'real' *penti;* the ambiguity of the designation 'real' becomes apparent here.

Another major ambiguity emerged in the seminars that were held in conjunction with *Penti Manggarai 2001*. On the second day of events a *lonto leok* (sitting around) was held. This was inspired by the custom in Manggaraian villages where people sit around in the front room of the drum house and deliberate on important actions that have to be decided upon. Men from every institutional group in Manggarai had been invited to represent the people under their constituency. Political leaders from the old and new administrative sub-districts were invited. The descendants of heads of old administrative units, called *dalu* and *gelarang*—which were in effect up to the end of the Dutch colonial period—were invited, as were all the *kepala desa,* the heads of the new village units introduced during the New Order. Also the *guru agama*—Catholic religious teachers, from each village parish —were invited to attend the *penti* celebration. This led to a hodgepodge collection of people, who at times were not sure what they were supposed to be representing.

There were many complaints about the breakdown in authority and the loss of cultural meaning of many of the positions which remained in name only. There were criticisms of the way the New Order government had created a new administrative system that had no meaning when set beside, or on top of, the system of government and authority that resided in *adat* of the past. When land conflicts emerged, it should have been the *tua teno*—the ritual land leader, prior even to *dalu* and *gelarang*—who was consulted, but instead more often it had been the *kepala desa*. No wonder, people mused, that the conflicts could not be resolved. In general there were calls for, for want of a better word, autonomy in the governance and decision making of local village life, but no clear way was

seen to do this. Not unexpectedly, the *bupati* called for *reformasi* in his summing up of the day's discussion, but seemed to be blaming the villagers for their own loss of culture and direction. He seemed oblivious of the accusations being made at *lonto leok,* that it had been the New Order government that had been the source of many local problems and that people basically wanted to be left to their own devices.

Indeed this is the opinion of many intellectuals in Ruteng who work in various LSM,[23] that the government is not really allowing true autonomy to flourish in Manggarai, that in fact it is getting in the way of it. Many LSM accuse the local politicians of not understanding what regional autonomy is about, or even worse of purposely distorting the idea of autonomy so as to further their own agenda. For example, LSM members said that the government gave the populace reason to fear autonomy, making them think that it will be a tremendous fiscal burden on the regions. The government led people to think that Manggarai has great reason to worry, being a poor region, with not much to support itself. According to some LSM members this is a purposeful distortion, because regional autonomy is not about 100 per cent fiscal responsibility, but instead concerns making choices 'from the ground' about what needs to be done for 'good governance' in each region. Some LSM members say that the local government is deliberately confusing regional autonomy with federalism in order to scare the people.

Golo Mondo: local autonomy or BPD?

Penti Manggarai 2001 purportedly revived a ritual that most people insisted was grounded in the Manggaraian village, the *beo*. The *beo,* as we have discussed, had a different meaning for those living in Manggarai and those living in Jakarta. The displacement of the idea of the *beo*—the village—over time has not only had to do with people migrating out of them, but also was radically altered during the New Order because of government policy, particularly the village law no. 5/1979, that standardized the administration of Indonesian villages according to one model. The *beo* of Manggarai lost their shape and what autonomy they had, to become reformed as *desa,* which were headed by *kepala desa* (village heads). *Desa* were geographic units, which marked out territories according to the convenience of the government. *Beo* had been units that were based on genealogical connections, and the lands associated with these *beo* were not always contiguous. The reshaping of *desa* boundaries, therefore, after the village law of 1979, led to many competing claims over land and subsequently many land wars. The regional autonomy law no. 22 appears to have given room for people in the regions to reshape their village administrations and organizations so as to return to some kind of indigenous structure.

In the regional autonomy law no. 22, specific mention is made of the *badan perwakilan desa* (BPD or village representative body). This is a committee of people which is supposed to act side by side with the *kepala desa* (the village

head recognized by the central government): to ensure that the customs and *adat* of the population are protected and respected; to make the rules of the *desa;* to make sure that the needs and desires of the population are heard; and to make sure that the local village government acts properly and does its job.[24] In general the BPD was introduced into the regional autonomy law to make sure that the local people were not overlooked, that local customs and socio-cultural specificities would be respected, and that the government representative within the local community, the *kepala desa,* would not only serve the needs of higher level officials, who in the New Order era demanded and received what they wanted from the local communities, facilitated by the village headman. The BPD was conceived of as an attempt to ensure local participation and the end of KKN, which had been rampant at the higher levels of Indonesian government but had penetrated to all levels during the New Order administration.

Regulations that govern the selection of the BPD are found in pasal 33.[25] The individuals must:

A Be god-fearing
B Loyal to *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution
C Unconnected with the events of 3 0 September 1965 and the Communist Party
D Have at least a high school education
E Be at least 25 years of age
F Sound of mind and body
G Not be affected by memory loss or possession
H Be good, honest and fair
I Never have been in jail for a criminal offence
J Never have had their right to vote taken away
K Know their region and be known by the local people
L Be willing to be put up as a candidate for the BPD
M Be faithful to other requirements that fit with local custom and local government regulations.

A critical assessment of these rules of recruitment, however, shows that they are no different from the rules of recruitment of local government officials in the New Order. These rules do not actually allow local people to pick the candidates that they feel are most appropriate to be their local representatives, or who will protect custom and keep an eye on the running of the local government. For example, it may be that local people feel that some elders, who have never had any formal education, are the ones most appropriate to serve on a council such as this, but the national laws governing recruitment to this council eliminate them just as they had eliminated them from becoming *kepala desa*.[26]

It is also problematic that the village council is set up in opposition to the executive branch of government in the village, the *kepala desa,* who, if he still wants to be involved in corruption etc., will do his best to keep control of power

in the village and obstruct the BPD. Instead of placing the BPD in a role as watchdog over the *kepala desa,* what is needed is a clear programme for re-educating people in the government about what the role of a public servant is. During the New Order, more often than not, people saw public office as a way of enriching themselves rather than serving the public or the needs of their region. We are of the opinion that just the institution of the BPD is not going to change this mindset. Also, people have been socialized by the New Order paradigm of power and control to expect everything to come from the top, to depend on 'projects' that were sent down from Jakarta, and then just wait for them to be executed and hope that some use may come out of them for the local community. So, again, a whole mindset change is needed, a new socialization process, to change the social and cultural paradigm of 'top-down' and 'trickle-down', to make the local people aware of the need to be responsible for themselves, but also to demand their right to be so under the new autonomy laws.

What still remains a problem in the concept of the BPD is the structure of the *desa* itself, which is not in Manggarai, and probably not in most places in Indonesia, founded on a territorial administration that is meaningful in terms of *adat*. The restructuring of administration, according to law no. 5/1979, dismantled the political structures of old that were meaningfully associated with territories, ruled by particularly customary laws about land tenure and community, and imposed the uniform system of *desa, dusun* etc. Building on this in the autonomy era seems self-defeating, since it is not really allowing the *adat* communities of old, that still have quite meaningful roles in terms of control over land in Manggarai, to have an administrative and a legal function. This means that the supposed respect and protection of local customs is paid only lip service in the law about BPD, but in fact has no reality.

This view has been stated quite firmly by a number of LSM in Manggarai. One LSM in Ruteng, *Yayasan Membangun Desa Mandiri,* started 'socialization' programmes about regional autonomy in 2000. These socialization programmes were funded by YAPIKA (an LSM located in Jakarta) and were involved in discussing the role of BPD. Interestingly, but perhaps unfortunately, the local government in Ruteng only started their own 'socialization programmes' about regional autonomy at the beginning of 2002. What is particularly unfortunate—but also quite typical in respect to the way civil servant tasking is done—is that the person who is in charge of the regional autonomy office in Ruteng has no basic knowledge of what regional autonomy is about.

Rather interestingly, according to the Desa Mandiri LSM head, the *camat* (sub-district head) does not have any idea what his function will be under the new regional autonomy structure. Similarly perhaps to the floating position of the governor, between the *bupati* and the president, the *camat* has an unclear position between the *bupati,* the BPD and the *kepala desa*.

A certain emphasis on the village seems to be giving the indigenous village communities a return to their structure of the past, and a chance to run their lives as autonomous villages. However just as *gotong royong,* a fairly widespread

Figure 9.1 The structure of a 'traditional' village.

Indonesian custom of mutual assistance, was reinvented at the national level and exploited for the purposes of people outside of village communities (Bowen 1986), we suggest that the BPD is attempting to reinvent the autonomous village, but for the purposes of people outside the actual village. It is possible to suggest that in some respects it seems very tempting for the *kabupaten* to become a New Order state, writ small, where the *bupati* has an opportunity, through his direct administrative links to the centre and the village, to make many decisions that will open up villages, for example to investment or exploitation by outsiders, without the agreement of local villagers, or with little understanding of the consequences.

It is for this reason that some LSMs are looking for some solutions to the ineptitude and the intrusion of the local regency government in Manggarai on the potential flowering of autonomy in the Manggaraian villages. Working together with local communities, some LSMs are helping them to come up with alternatives to the BPD scheme, and the New Order administrative system of governance. Among others is the LSM *Asprida (Yayasan Primasaeri Desa),* whose director argues that it is best perhaps to use the term 'local autonomy' as opposed to 'regional autonomy'. 'Regional autonomy' is looking at this issue from a state perspective, and is concerned with administrative matters. While to recognize 'local autonomy' means looking at the issue not only as a territorial issue, but as a genealogical one. Autonomy was the true state of the village before the various colonialisms in Manggarai that originated from Bima, Goa, The Netherlands and Jakarta, all of which have systematically marginalized the Manggaraian villager.

If the government is serious about revitalizing *adat* and giving autonomy to the villages then, according to the *Asprida* director, Manggarai must split into five separate regencies. Only this would give a certain level of cultural uniformity to each district, since the diversity in the existing district of Manggarai rebels against any kind of governance that could really give attention to cultural integrity. Anything less than this would be forcing some villagers to conform to a culture that they did not recognize as their own—a position in radical opposition, therefore, to the Van Bekkum Foundation's idea of 'Manggaraian identity' and 'Manggaraian culture'.

Mondo village is the village where *Asprida* has been working, because the villagers there came up with an initiative for a system of administration that reflects their cultural imperatives. For them, a genealogical structure, reflective of the structures of the past autonomous villages and still having considerable meaning in their own daily lives and land tenure, is the only way to effectively imagine an autonomous village *(otonomi golo)*. The structure as they conceive of it is shown in Fig. 9.1.

Golo[27] (or *beo*)—the village—is headed by the *tua golo,* in the past a position inherited within a particular lineage of a clan *(wau)*. The *tua golo* is the village representative to the outside world and its guardian of *adat* law. His important right-hand man is the *tua teno,* the guardian of the *teno,* in whom is invested the functions of dividing up the communal land for use each time a new field is opened, and heading all the rituals associated with land use. These are essential tasks and make his role an imperative one for the continuation of the agricultural communities of Manggarai. He also is the witness as to who has rights over what pieces of land. His position was drastically weakened in the New Order regime, and this is why, so many villagers and LSMs argue, today land conflicts abound. Under the *tua teno* and *tua golo* are the lineage heads *(tua panga)* and extended family heads *(tua kilo),* who act as representatives in village meetings and decision making. All of the positions created by the state for keeping peace and safety (*hansib* and police) will be unnecessary, it is argued by the people of Golo Mondo, since everything would be organized by kinship, and therefore safety would not be an issue.

The state, argues the director of *Asprida,* has never used the potential of developing the villages through this traditional system of kinship, but instead has intruded on their existence with administrative structures, legal rules and various law enforcing bodies that did more to disrupt and disembed village life than to advance it. What the villagers of Golo Mondo plan to do is to rework all of the land cases that were settled during the New Order—by decree, by law suit, by sale—and get their *adat* land recognized by agrarian law. They have already started to do this, after their ritual of *penti* in September 2001. This way they hope that land conflicts will disappear from their village, and in future order can be maintained by a structure that is formed by the village, for the village.

Conclusion

We have argued that regional autonomy looks different from many different positions in the Manggaraian community. People who are Manggaraian descendants and immigrants to Jakarta see their affiliation and position in Manggarai in a regional autonomy era very differently than they did in the era of hyper-centralization. For this reason, their ideas about their own culture have been shaped by concerns over what their fate will be, and what opportunities may lie ahead in this time of emerging autonomy. In the local governmental seat, matters of culture also loom large, and the local politicians see their own

opportunities to use culture to their advantage, although they struggle against increasing cries from the populace who do not see 'Manggaraian culture' in a similar way to the politicians and the businessmen of the various capital cities. Local people instead are struggling also to reinvent their lives, but more to accommodate a cultural and social existence that they have lived with and grown with through various eras of external domination and control. 'Culture' and 'identity' for them are not really the issue, as much as an administrative structure that will work for them, and which reflects their lives. This is because for them community still exists, a community grounded in land, kinship and marriage relations which, although it has certainly been radically affected by New Order policy, still has a certain meaning that is grounded in *adat*. The struggle goes on, however, and it will be a real test of the regional autonomy laws to see whether or not the people, who were disenfranchised 'floating masses' during the New Order, can find an autonomy that they really are satisfied with, and which will let them live the lives that they want to lead.

Epilogue

The tragic events of March 2004, when four Manggaraian farmers were shot dead —and many more wounded—in front of the Ruteng police station because they were protesting the arrest of several women who had been digging up some tapioca growing on land that the local regency government claims is 'forest land', is the culmination of events that show that there is a major difference between 'regional autonomy' and 'local autonomy'. The regional government of Manggarai, in October 2002, and later in October 2003, started forcefully taking back land that they claimed was 'forest land', by chain-sawing tens of thousands of coffee trees in a number of villages to the west and east of the capital, Ruteng. The fact that the coffee trees were initially provided by the Dutch colonial and Indonesian national governments and that most of the plantations are many decades old, located on land that local people insist is their ancestral land, has not fazed the regional government's 'operation'. They have been using *reboisasi* (re-greening) funds from the central government, and elicited help from high school students and the military. These 'operations' have left many villagers' lives shattered and their livelihoods devastated. These events seem to point to the truth, that some regional governments are becoming heavy-handed, New Order-style governments, writ small.

Notes

1 Some of the research upon which this chapter is based was made possible by grant number R111–11– 000–022–112/007 from the National University of Singapore. Thanks to the National University of Singapore for making this research possible.

2 Part of the reform-ation and autonomy process in Indonesia has been the reconfiguring of administrative districts, as has been discussed in several other chapters in this volume. There has been a movement to create Flores as a separate province, which has been approved at various levels, but has not yet been implemented. The division of Manggarai into two separate regencies was a long drawn-out process as well, which only took effect in July 2003. This chapter was substantially written before that date, and concerns mostly what has become the 'main' or 'mother' regency *(kabupaten induk),* though what is said here is in many ways true for the new regency of Manggarai Barat (West Manggarai).

3 Many have already discussed national rituals and various tourist rituals as 'invented traditions' in the context of modernizing Indonesia (e.g. Volkman 1990, Picard 1997).

4 Yando Zakaria (2000:245), basing his information on Imam Satikno (1990:49–50) discusses the earlier law, which is virtually the opposite of the present autonomy law, in spirit, if not in actual implementation. 'Oleh karena suku-suku bangsa dan masyarakat-masyarakat hukum adat tidak mandiri lagi, tetapi sudah merupakah bagian dari satu bangsa Indonesia di wilayah Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia, maka wewenang berdasarkan hak ulayat yang berhubungan dengan hak-hak atas tanah, yang dahulu mutlak berada di tangan kepala suku/masyarakat hukum adat/ desa sebagai penguasa tertinggi dalam wilayahnya…dengan sendirinya beralih kepada pemerintah pusat sebagai penguasa tertinggi, pemegang hak menguasasi/ ulayat seluruh wilayah negara.'

5 As of July 2003 Manggarai was split into two regencies. Ruteng is the capital of Manggarai, while Labuan Bajo is the capital of the newly formed regency of Manggarai Barat (West Manggarai). The regencies will still be interlinked until the next regent election, when they will become fully autonomous.

6 At least 12 editions of Manggaraian hymns, *Ndere Serani,* have been produced since the 1930s, an effort started by early Dutch priests and some early Manggaraian school teachers to Christianize Manggaraian ritual songs.

7 For an analysis of the Manggaraian village social world and the cosmological and symbolic ideas associating the drum house, the village and the fields see Erb (1999).

8 The first Bishop of Manggarai, Wilhelmus van Bekkum was a Dutch missionary, who had been in Manggarai since 1939. He was made bishop in 1951 when Manggarai first became a diocese of its own. He had a great love of Manggaraian culture, being the pioneer of 'enculturation' activities even before the Vatican II Council in the early 1960s which institutionalized the merger of Catholic ritual with indigenous ritual. He was a proponent, in the 1940s of the radical 'buffalo mass', which never did go very far in the Catholic liturgy in Manggarai, being too 'heathen' for the taste of most priests at the time. Apart from his cultural activities (he also wrote a number of ground-breaking articles on Manggaraian history (van Bekkum 1944, 1946a, 1946b)), he also instigated many programmes to promote the health and education of Manggaraian peoples. For more on Catholicism in the Manggaraian/Florenese context, see Erb (2003).

9 For example, one very wealthy Manggaraian businessman had done a lot to help his own natal community by helping schools with supplies, lunch programmes and the like.

10 This prediction, on the eve of the elections of 2004, seems to be true. A number of Van Bekkum Foundation founders have stepped forward as candidates for both the central and local DPRs (legislative councils).
11 Only very recently have there been attempts to open up tertiary institutions in Ruteng.
12 In fact this ritual is not done all over the Manggaraian regency. The diversity of Manggaraian culture will be a point elaborated on a bit later.
13 'Sudah puluhan tahun kita lupa dan tidak tahu dengan budaya kita. Pada era otonomi daerah ini kita harus melakukan sesuatu untuk memajukan budaya Manggarai. Salah satunya yang kita lakukan hari ini. Hari ini kita bergembira dengan acara budaya kita', recorded by one of the authors who attended the *penti* festival in Jakarta.
14 'Karena kita tidak punya beo, compang, dan pa'ang dan natas (field) untuk caci maka semuanya dimodifikasi.'
15 It is interesting that a 'wedding' ceremony and romantic liaisons were chosen as the objects of display, pointing to an attitude that tends to 'romanticize' culture.
16 During the Dutch colonial era, when missionaries attempted to Christianize Manggaraian songs or even translate the Bible, it was always in the dialect of central Manggaraian. In fact Father J.A.J. Verheijen, the linguist, who has written the Manggaraian dictionary and done word lists of other languages in Manggarai, has estimated that there are six distinct languages in the Manggarai regency, and numerous other dialects (1991).
17 Interestingly in June 2002 a descendent of the Todo family arranged a major ritual in Todo, meant to be an event to bring tourist recognition to the village (he attempted to organize it through a professional tourist consultant in Jakarta). It can be argued that one of the reasons that this man felt the need to perform a large ritual in Todo, meant to include both foreigners, Jakartans (the tourism Minister again was involved) and locals, was because of the *penti* ritual the previous year.
18 This is read by many as being particularly appropriate, since before he was *bupati* he headed the Department of Education and Culture in Ruteng.
19 After the death of this king, Alexander Baruk, in 1949, the house was used at various times as offices and as a museum. It burned down in 1992 (under suspicious circumstances, according to some of our informants). However being the symbol of Manggarai that it has come to be, it was rapidly rebuilt in the exact shape, and is now used as offices again.
20 Despite his many delaying tactics that dragged out the breaking away of Western Manggarai, even though letters of approval were given as early as 2001, this *bupati* could not stop the formation of West Manggarai regency, which finally occurred in July 2003.
21 Motang Rua was a noted hero in Manggarai history who fought against the Dutch when they first entered the villages of Manggarai.
22 A number of months after *Penti Manggarai 2001* finished, one of the drum houses where some of the rituals had taken place burned down. People pointed to this as proof that *penti* should never have been done the way it was.
23 This is often translated as NGO. However we prefer to use the acronym LSM since the meaning of LSM seems far more clearly associated with 'civil society' than does NGO. LSM would translate literally as the people's self-supporting (self-sufficient) organization. The term *swadaya* implies that a community itself is

empowered. Whereas just simply saying that an organization is non-governmental does not necessarily mean that the community itself is the one involved in the organization, or that any people who are part of the community are so involved. This becomes particularly clear when looking at some of the so-called NGOs that operate in Flores, many of which originate from outside of the country, let alone the community, and are really big international organizations. (This is especially true of some of the conservation organizations operating in Indonesia.) A similar point was made in Eldridge (1989) about different types of NGOs, who relates that LSM was originally used to refer to more grassroots organizations. It does not seem to be the case today, however, when LSM and NGO seem to be used interchangeably, at least in Manggarai.

24 This is found in *pasal* (passage) 104, of law no. 22.

25

A	Bertaqwa kepada Tuhan YME
B	Setia dan taat kepada Pancasila dan UUD 1945
C	Tidak perna terlibat G30S/PKI
D	Pendidikan minimal SLTP dan/atau berpengetahuan sederajat
E	Umur minimal 25 tahun
F	Sehat jasmani dan rohani
G	Tidak terganggu jiwa/ingatannya
H	Berkelakuan baik, jujur, dan adil
I	Tidak pernah dipenjara karena tindak pidana
J	Tidak dicabut hak pilihnya
K	Mengenal daerahnya dan dikenal oleh masyarakat di desa setempat
L	Bersedia dicalonkan menjadi anggota BPD
M	Menaati syarat-syarat lain sesuai adat istiadat yang diatur dalam Perda.

26 One of the authors heard of a case a few years ago, after the rules of recruitment to become *kepala desa* had been changed to demand high school education, that only four people in one *desa* were eligible to run. All four were young wastrels who had returned to their village after finishing high school and did little more than gamble and make trouble. The true respected leaders of the village, based on seniority and responsibility in the village, were precluded from running because of the new laws. People complained that the laws were designed for other places in Indonesia, Java perhaps, where more people were highly educated. Clearly these kind of rules can be disastrous for out of the way places like Manggaraian villages, with so-called *SDM rendah* (low human resource), considered such because of low education.

27 *Golo* is used to refer to a village that is not entirely independent from its 'mother' village. *Beo* is a fully fledged independent village. For a discussion of the difference see Lawang (1989).

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10
Decentralization and regional violence in the post-Suharto state[1]

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Introduction

Indonesia has embarked on perilous (re-)democratization, precipitated by the resignation of the country's long-time authoritarian ruler, Suharto, in May 1998. Competitive elections have been held; media licences have been liberalized; the army's visibility in politics has been curtailed; decentralization has taken place and human rights talk has flourished. These very same processes, however, have erected roadblocks in democratization's path: a politicization of ethno-religious and territorial-based identities; extensive regional—communal and separatist violence; and a concomitant crisis of more than one million internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The sub-national settings of these latter developments vividly illustrate the limitations of the democratic consolidation literature. This body of work has focused on national level processes, institutions and actors, while disregarding sub-national processes essential to meaningful democratization (Fox 1994; O'Donnell 1999). Reflected within the Indonesian context, views restricted to strategic bargaining among Jakarta's elite elide the complexity of the country's political life (Singh 1999; O'Rourke 2002). Consider decentralization, one touchstone of reform politics in the post-Suharto state. While correctly theorized as an imperative to the democratic empowerment of regional government and local populations, democracy theorists often cast decentralization in an idealized light (Diamond *et al.* 1995; Manor 1999). There is little acknowledgment of its dark side—for instance, pernicious nativism and heightening xenophobia. In Indonesia, although decentralization has been seen as the means to arrest the coercive and excessive centralization of the New Order, to dampen separatist aspirations of resource-rich regions, and (controversially) to facilitate native son capture of local bureaucracies and lucrative political posts, it has nonetheless engendered several instances of massive, sustained violence, including ethno-religious cleansings.

Recently, writings on both decentralization and mass violence in Indonesia have been prolific; but few have yet to explicitly link the two. Observers of decentralization have impressively delineated the programme's legal, economic,

fiscal, administrative and historical aspects (Booth 1999; McLeod 2000; Alm *et al.* 2001; Bell 2001; Jaya and Dick 2001; Ray and Goodpaster 2003). A critical but overlooked feature of decentralization, however, has been its impact on local *political* constellations. If political matters are discussed, such as the rise of local bosses, fiefdoms, decentralized corruption and acute ethnocentrism, they are done so broadly or in passing (Down to Earth, 2000; Dick 2001; Schulte-Nordholt 2002; Sukma 2003; for an exception, see Aspinall and Fealy 2003). Grounded accounts of how these processes actually work or how outcomes materialize are wanting. Without this regional political detail, we remain ill-equipped to demonstrate how, on occasion, the local politics of decentralization has instigated sustained, collective violence in the country's regions.

Moreover, accounts of massive strife in the post-Suharto state have failed to identify decentralization as a facilitating mechanism in regional violence. At the outset, we should point out that, contrary to some explanations, these violent incidents are not due to primordial animosities or incompatible cultures inexorably locked in turmoil (Suparlan 1999; Bainus 2001; Darwin 2003). The clash of cultures argument cannot account for variations of violence across time and space, let alone the changing political contexts under which it may (or may not) erupt. Nor does the similar 'return of the repressed' view have much explanatory power (Estrade 1998; Rohde 2001; Collins 2002). This perspective misleadingly surmises that, with the collapse of an authoritarian state, deeply rooted local conflicts, once ruthlessly suppressed, resurface with amplified might (Brubaker 1998). By suggesting that settling scores underlies the unrest, this view discounts the new political collectivities, identities and tussles that emerge amid this state's demise. Rather, I argue that anxieties of a troubled present and uncertain future underpin the violence. In particular, these incidents are best understood within the *political* context of a decentralized, post-Suharto state.

Before proceeding further, it requires emphasis that I bound my analysis by focusing on violence rather than an ambiguous notion of conflict as the outcome of unfolding political processes. In this way, it warns against the susceptibility in the study of Indonesian politics to conflate violence with conflict. As authors of a recent literature review on ethnic violence perceptibly noted: 'violence is not a quantitative degree of conflict but a qualitative form of conflict, with its own dynamics.' Accordingly, 'the study of violence should be emancipated from the study of conflict and treated as an autonomous phenomenon in its own right' (Brubaker and Laitin 1998:425, 426). In times of democratization, conflict is ubiquitous; violence is not. At concern here is a particular form of violence, similar to what Horowitz (2001) has labelled 'the deadly ethnic riot'. Semi-organized, semi-spontaneous, it is a collective, lethal attack in which significant numbers of civilians target other civilians according to ethnic or religious identities. Attacks typically last more than a day, although a marked ebb and flow of violence characterizes the riot's rhythm. This qualification, which still encompasses a broad range and frequent form of violence in Indonesia's regions, is distinct from terrorist bombings, army-on-police hostility (Roosa 2003),

lynching of criminals (Colombijn 2002), riots that largely target property (Sidel 2001) and army atrocities against separatist movements or civilians in combat zones. Attempts to incorporate all forms of increasing violence in Indonesia into a single explanatory framework will obscure more than they reveal (Munir 2001; Colombijn and Lindblad 2002).

The dizzying interplay of the historical roots of bloodshed (Colombijn and Lindblad 2002) and its current array of form and content prevent assigning any singular cause to the spate of collective violence. Nevertheless, a few 'culprits' do appear across accounts. These include factions within the army (Aditjondro 2001; Liem 2002), the structural impact of uneven in-migration (Bertrand 2000; Tirtosudarmo 2001, 2003; Collins 2002) and the politicization of territorial-based or ethno-religious identities (International Crisis Group 2001; van Bruinessen 2002; Davidson 2003). The privatization of public security (van Dijk 2001), which involves young male thugs *(preman)* in quasi-state or party-backed youth organizations, also surfaces regularly (Barker 1998; Ryter 1998; Colombijn and Lindblad 2002; Schulte-Nordholt 2002). Still, if these sets of factors were operative under the New Order, then we must ask: what has changed in the broader political context (that is the post-Suharto state) that has allowed for unprecedented regional violence, especially with regard to scale and intensity, in such places as Maluku, Poso, Central Kalimantan, Lombok, Sumba and Papua?[2] Even in West Kalimantan, a province of violent renown, as will be discussed shortly, the forms in which the most recent strife was waged were meaningfully altered: first, Sambas Malays acted as catalysts in the clashes of 1999 and, second, the theatre of violence moved from semi-rural Sambas district to urban Pontianak in 2000 and again in 2001.

One answer to how the wider political landscape has changed is the retreat of the central state. However, by shifting our perspective to a regional, rather than Jakarta-centric viewpoint, the relevant analytical framework becomes not a flagging central state, but a decentralizing one. Regional elites have become embroiled in new power struggles embedded in this decentralizing context. Crucially, the country's recent spasm of regional riots is best reflected in attempts to capture the newly empowered sub-national units of government at the district or provincial level. Integral to this process are similar attempts to control 'the street', that is, staking a claim to a given area's illegal business practices and networks through violent mass mobilizations.

The prevailing sense of fear and insecurity that accompanies this transfer of authority has intensified such aforementioned factors as the emboldening of new or established *preman* militias (Kristiansen 2003; MacDougall 2003). Furthermore, army factions connived to discredit the former President Abdurrahman Wahid, while the politicization of ethnic, religious, racial and class relations (known by its Indonesian acronym, SARA), once discouraged under the New Order, has given 'birth to a monster of Frankenstein' (Schulte-Nordholt 2002:50). The old ideological facade of 'unity in diversity' has rapidly

disintegrated. All told, the regional political impact of decentralization demands explicit engagement.

Regrettably, this has not always been the case. Take for example scholarly explanations of the Moluccan tragedy. Some analyses, while attuned to national processes, privilege regional power struggles over outside (national) forces in the instigation of bloodshed. One slight failing in these otherwise fine accounts, however, has been insufficient attention paid to decentralization. How enhanced regional autonomy itself has altered local political constellations, how old or new alliances stood vis-à-vis consequences of the new laws remains unexplored. Instead, decentralization gets unwittingly subsumed under the rubric of rapid democratization (Bertrand 2002) or competitive electoral pressures (van Klinken 2001). Rapid democratization, if left unpacked, fails to specify which mechanisms matter most, a step necessary if a comparative analysis of mass violence is contemplated. Moreover, heightened electoral competition, although more specified than rapid democratization, is only one aspect of decentralization. As the case of West Kalimantan will attest, collective violence need not be instigated and fought within the confines of formal party politics.

With that said, this chapter will detail how the local politics of decentralization informed, to differing degrees, a series of lethal riots in West Kalimantan, from early 1999 to 2001. Three interlinked developments with regard to regional autonomy stand out. First is the heightened competition over local resources and the enhanced symbolic significance of the local. This includes the rise of ethnocentrism and its concomitant demand for *putra daerah* (native son) visibility and leadership, something the New Order assiduously stifled. Second was the demarcation of new districts along ethnic lines to accommodate these demands. In West Kalimantan, these dynamics helped to precipitate massive riots in early 1999. While regional autonomy was designed locally to allow for 'Malay' control of a new Sambas district, the migrant Madurese, the outsiders, threatened this domination; in the end, a Malay-oriented, youth militia (later aided by mobilized Dayaks) expelled the Madurese from the district.

The third development has been the muddled implementation of decentralization. In particular, the confusion over the political purposes of the governor's annual accountability report, as mandated in the then new regional autonomy law, exacerbated tensions. This uncertainty precipitated a riot smaller in scale but one that uncharacteristically afflicted the provincial capital, Pontianak. Although these events of October 2000 appeared as an appendage to the Sambas mayhem— 'Malay' versus 'Madurese'—in this case, ethnic chauvinism was used to mask a power struggle over the governorship. Provincial assembly members and ethnic leaders sought to oust Aspar Aswin, a prototypical New Order 'governor-general', in the name of reform *(reformasi),* regional autonomy and nativism. Calling upon figures of the city's underworld to orchestrate the riot, this retired three-star general vanquished his challengers, thereby rescuing his lucrative patronage network. This riot then fed the city's succeeding unrest in June 2001. Apart from personal attacks on Madurese, this

riot featured the burning of barracks that housed several thousand Madurese IDPs from Sambas who, at the time, had been housed in these makeshift camps for more than two years.

Sambas and violence: the same old thing?[3]

One of the country's least densely populated provinces per capita, West Kalimantan provides an instructive case for the implementation of regional autonomy and its impact on mass violence. Different forms of collective violence dot the region's history. In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, Dutch colonial armies waged war against Chinese gold-mining associations *(kongsi),* while non-Muslim indigenes, renowned for martial bravery, were deployed by colonial authorities as auxiliaries to crush local rebellions or similar disturbances. Significantly, this colonial policy, along with missionary schooling and pseudoscientific upriver explorations, forged a monolithic 'Dayak' ethnicity from a diverse autochthonous population. Dayak was thus to stand (in the colonial gaze) in opposition to their Muslim 'Malay' rulers whose own authority rested on colonial bayonets and contracts. Moreover, during World War II, occupying Japanese troops in coastal West Kalimantan committed the largest slaughter of civilians in the archipelago. Later, Dayak war parties staged devastating attacks against the occupiers in Sanggau district in mid-1945. Still, despite this disquieting narrative, as argued elsewhere, the region's infamous Dayak-Madurese clashes of late stem from the late 1960s when Suharto's New Order army instigated 'warrior' Dayaks to cleanse Chinese inland communities accused of supplying communist rebels. Dayaks and Madurese then tussled over the expulsions' spoils, a dynamic which, amid deepening recriminations and antipathies, spiralled into intermittent yet contained riots (Davidson and Kammen 2002; Davidson 2003).

Given this history, the contemporary politics of decentralization clearly did not *introduce* lethal riots to West Kalimantan. When violence broke out in 1999, few were surprised. This is not say, however, that these clashes were inevitable or historically determined. Instead, a political process argument (Mitra 1995) informed by decentralization best accounts for the riot's occurrence, timing, location and forms. Specifically, the instrumental participation of coastal Sambas Malays demands attention. Having largely evaded the sporadic bloodshed of their inland neighbours for three decades, why were Sambas Malays suddenly thrust headlong into collective violence against Madurese in early 1999?

In short, local Malay elites were threatened by a Dayak ethno-political movement. Long marginalized by colonial and successive Indonesian regimes, Dayaks began to mobilize politically and forcefully following the great clashes of 1997. Incited by disparate Dayak parties—elites of the government-backed party Golkar, activists in Dayak-oriented non-government organizations in Pontianak and ambitious civil servants—the movement quickly gained momentum. Fortuitously, it was well positioned to capitalize on the political

turbulence and expanded freedoms following Suharto's fall. Among other things, at stake were, first, greater recognition of *hukum adat* (customary law), principally to re-claim ancestral lands dispossessed by New Order capital, and second, visible government posts. In the main, New Order authorities shut Dayaks out of district-executive *(bupati)* positions. By mid-1999, the threat this regional movement posed had obtained Dayaks four out of the seven posts.

Within this context, the Malay elite faced being politically outmanoeuvred, most notably in the race for *bupati* posts, whose political and financial value rose exponentially under regional autonomy. What is more, the disdain in which members of the Malay elite hold Dayaks—deemed 'primitive' and 'backward'— made Dayak gains particularly galling. So, to answer this advance, specifically 'Malay' organizations, once rare, blossomed. One noteworthy example was the founding of an elite forum in Pontianak called the Malay Cultural and Customary Council (*Majelis Adat dan Budaya Melayu,* MAMB).[4] With aims to safeguard Malay interests, it voiced concerns against (what it perceived to be) the increasing and deliberate *hukum adat* sanctioning against Malays and other Muslims.

More important, MAMB sought to gain a share of the monopoly Dayaks had on indigeneity, the hallmark of regional autonomy local politics. The origins of the Malays are contentious and settling this debate is not pertinent for the present argument's purposes.[5] Instead, significant was the fact that, after perennial denial of commonalities and a conscious distancing from 'uncivilized' Dayaks, Malay leaders began *publicly* to acknowledge a shared ancestry and desired recognition as 'Dayaks' (*Pontianak Post* 23 December 1999). Put simply, as one Malay proponent wrote in a local newspaper, 'the Malays of West Kalimantan are either indigenous peoples or Dayaks who converted to Islam' (Efendi 1999). Thus, Malays argued that ancestral conversion to Islam should not preclude claims to indigeneity. The impetus behind this discursive change, of course, was the Dayak movement. It not only transformed 'Dayak' into a politically charged badge of honour. It also threatened Malay elite interests by exploiting the indigenous peoples tag to place Dayaks in choice government positions. But it was in Sambas, then the region's theatre of violence, not in Pontianak, where riots capitalizing on 'Malay indigeneity' first erupted.

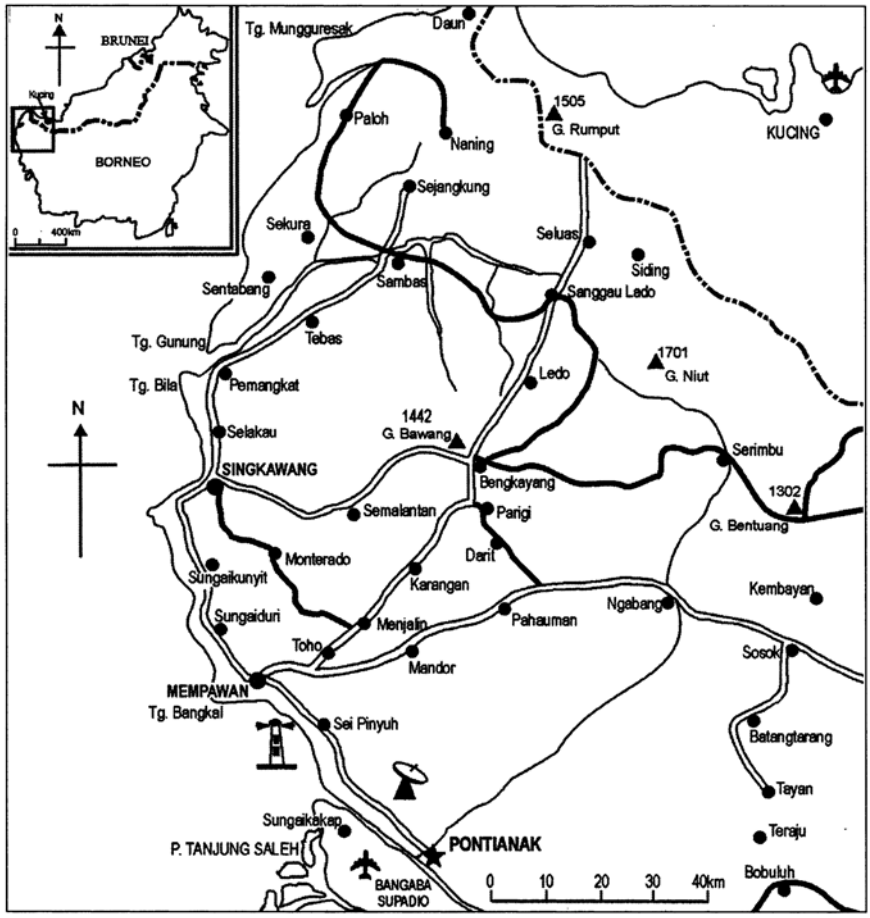
In this case, decentralization proved pivotal, because the original Sambas district was divided into inland Bengkayang and coastal Sambas districts (see Map 10.1). Ideally, the split envisaged a Dayak-dominated Bengkayang and a Malay Sambas. Dayak control of the former was irrefutable; at issue was the latter. Haunted by the ambiguity of domination in coastal Sambas, Malay leaders needed to declare Sambas as its own, to demonstrate that Sambas is to Malays what Bengkayang is to Dayaks. The Madurese, already demonized as hot-headed criminals and as perennial instigators of ethnic unrest, posed little threat in any formal, political sense.[6] For the Malay elite, the problem was of 'the street'. If Madurese *preman* continued to control local gambling, extortion and protection rackets, crime and informal service sectors like transport, how could Sambas be

considered 'Malay'? In other words, 'Malay' ascendancy—both material and symbolic— would be queried as long as these thugs held sway. A decentralized Sambas, 'homeland of the Malay', needed to be controlled by Malays, not by Madurese. More accurately, as stewards of Sambas, the identity 'Malay' needed to demonstrate that it would formidably compete with 'Dayak' in the heightened competitiveness of regional autonomy local politics. So, violence against a vulnerable enemy to harness mobilization energies and to fortify identities would jumpstart this 'Malay' resurgence. That is, through anti-Madurese violence, 'Malay' *proves* its indigeneity to be on par with 'Dayak' in this politicized field of ethnicity.

The Communication Forum of Malay Youth (FKPM), a youth-oriented security militia that formed weeks prior to the escalation of hostilities, was instrumental in the anti-Madurese mobilizations. With implicit backing from the Sambas *bupati* and military and police commanders, FKPM led young Malays up and down the Sambas coast killing and forcefully evacuating Madurese. After two weeks of sporadic clashes, the mysterious murder of a local Dayak precipitated concurrent Dayak engagement against the Madurese.[7] This participation bolstered FKPM efforts. All told, the violence lasted from mid-February until early April. It claimed hundreds of lives, many of whom were killed in gruesome fashion. Not incidentally, the places where FKPM's roots are the deepest—Pemangkat, Tebas and Jawai sub-districts—map onto the riots' epicentre. Drawing its strength from networks of Malay youth and *preman* who now run former Madurese rackets, FKPM wields great power locally. For instance, although not a political party, it essentially hand-picked the new Sambas *bupati,* Burhanuddin Rasyid, elected in May 2000.

In addition to Sambas Malay participation, the second novel, yet significant, characteristic of these riots was the thorough cleansing of some 50,000 Madurese from Sambas district. In previous clashes with Dayaks, Madurese in the main returned home, usually to rebuild razed houses. This time was different.[8] Amid the frenetic rise of ethic polarizations, only in a post-Suharto, decentralized state would systematic cleansing, once unimaginable, become thinkable and thus possible. There is little space here to detail the particulars of this cleansing. Without a doubt, local elites in Sambas and regional security forces backed the evacuations. Besides the dynamics mentioned above, considerations of saving the upcoming June elections and efforts to 'solve' the chronic ethnic unrest issue once and for all were also operative.

Although local processes are less than isomorphic, similar explusions have occurred across Indonesia. In mid-2001, some 1.3 million IDPs, who had fled areas as far flung as Aceh, Central and West Kalimantan, the former province of East Timor, North and South Maluku, and Central Sulawesi, were 'temporarily' housed in as many as 19 separate provinces, including East and Central Java (*Tempo* 17 June 2001). Incontrovertibly, almost the entire country has been affected by the imaginations and realizations of ethno-religious-based cleansings.



Map 10.1 West Kalimantan Province.

Gubernatorial tussles and urban riots

In mid-October 2000, the region's recurrent semi-rural bloodletting gained a new urban dimension when a traffic accident was swiftly transformed into a three-day spate of attacks on Madurese. Oddly enough, while West Kalimantan has become renowned for its ethnic unrest (Horowitz 2001:1), Pontianak remained riot-free. That is until elites exploited the putative ethnic dimensions of the Sambas riots to mask provincial power struggles, heightened by reform, decentralization and ethnic politicizations.

Importantly, in Pontianak, the dehumanization of Madurese was furthered by the arrival of tens of thousands of traumatized refugees from Sambas, escorted by military trucks and boats, who were immediately placed in holding camps,

sports stadiums and athletic fields.[9] Government officials later failed to relocate the IDPs to houses built about thirty miles south of the city.[10] Instead, refugees built semi-permanent shelter in the camps and demanded safe return to Sambas, an option the government—determined to capture the bonanza of massive construction and development monies—rejected outright.[11]

Meanwhile, galvanized by *reformasi* and the vibrancy of demonstrations in Jakarta, students in Pontianak had joined forces.[12] Gathering regularly in front of the local state university (University of Tanjungpura), they called on the then governor, Aspar Aswin, to resign. For the students, Aswin epitomized New Order rule and was seen as provincial ringleader of corruption, collusion and nepotism (KKN), the reform movement's most popular anti-regime slogan. Without his removal, students believed, attempts at meaningful, local reform would meet a dead end. A prototypical New Order governor, Aswin served Jakarta's interests while enriching himself, family and friends.[13] Unaccountable to electoral constituencies, he cultivated an impressive patronage network, nurtured via the granting of licences for such development projects as road construction, logging concessions and oil palm estates. Smuggling and illegal gold mining and logging were similarly pertinent. Most politicians, contractors, big businessmen and government-sanctioned organizations were in some manner party to this network. When it progressively frayed as certain figures betrayed their patron and sought his demise, Aswin responded by calling upon local subterranean figures to rescue his lucrative gubernatorial racket.

Bloodletting in Sambas and elections in June 1999 had temporarily derailed the students' anti-Aswin aspirations.[14] But with re-energized efforts, their demands gained greater currency when some local figures changed tracks to pursue Aswin's removal. Publicly, they reproached Aswin for failing to solve the province's ethnic strife and the concurrent refugee crisis (see below). Privately, motives behind this change were more complicated. They ranged from party and ethnic to personal interests. The role played by Gusti Syamsumin was telling. The provincial head of Golkar, head of the provincial assembly (DPRD I) and a native son Malay, Syamsumin was well positioned to succeed Aswin. Although Aswin as governor headed Golkar's board of advisors, the DPRD I Golkar faction backed (at least publicly) Syamsumin. Politicians from lesser parties, those visible in ethnic organizations, also jumped ship. Ismet Noor—head of PAN and MABM— and the late Herbertus Tekwaan—PBI's chair and a member of the Dayak *Majelis Adat*—highlighted this faction. All told, five DPRD I factions (Golkar, PPP, PDI/ PDKB, PBI and Pembaharuan) conspired to impeach Aswin. The PDI-P and military/police factions stood by their patron.[15]

Here, we start to sense how the politics underpinning the soon-to-be riots reflected the complexity of shifting alliances among various constituencies within the Dayak and Malay camps. Whereas tensions primarily resonated between these two broadly defined groups, the riots shortly diffused these and re-directed animosities onto convenient victims, the local Madurese. Significantly,

Dayak and Malay elites were found on both sides of the political divide that precipitated the violence.

To achieve their coup, the anti-Aswin factions sought legislative recourse in the new law on regional autonomy, law no. 22/1999. The law stipulates that the relevant legislative assembly can legally impeach a government executive (governor, mayor or *bupati*) by rejecting this official's annual accountability speech or progress report. In this case, the distinction in terms reflected the confusion that has permeated the implementation phase of decentralization.[16] Predicated on New Order precedent when the report was perfunctory, pro-Aswin factions maintained the speech was a progress report (*laporan progres/ kemajuan)* and therefore inadequate to dethrone Aswin (*Equator* 8 June 2000). Opponents countered that, as made explicit in the new law, it was an accountability speech *(laporan pertanggungjawaban)*. It was thus grounds for dismissal.[17]

Meanwhile, now with elite backing, the student demonstrations proliferated; but so did anti-student aggression. Here, two Aswin loyalists were key. Abas Fadhilah was a mid-size contractor, prominent gangster and one of many in Aswin's stable of beneficiaries enjoying the munificence of the province's public works department. In October 1999, he established a martial arts *(pencak silat)* centre called Ya-Qohar. Backed by Aswin, it quickly grew into the city's largest, leading Abas to declare himself 'Malay War Leader of the Undertow' *(Panglima Melayu Arus Bawah)*.[18] Second was Ali Anafia, former head of the city's *Pemuda Pancasila* youth organization, who was associated with the martial arts centre, Al-Faqar.[19] Both men mobilized *preman* to intimidate students and to stage pro-Aswin rallies. Interestingly, Anafia, a Golkar functionary, headed Pontianak's district assembly (DPRD II). Thus, if we recall Syamsumin's defection, we witness how Aswin adroitly split Golkar and isolated his adversaries at the provincial level while anchoring support at district levels in Pontianak and across the province.

On 14 July 2000, the day Aswin delivered his annual address to the DPRD I, a student named Syafruddin, one among some 800 gathered outside, was killed by sniper fire. Cascades of condemnations of Syafruddin's death flooded the local press; Aswin's days in office appeared numbered. Perhaps thinking that public opinion was on their side, rather than reject the speech—the legal route set out by law no. 22/1999—the five dissenting assembly factions signed a vote of no confidence *(mosi tak percaya)* calling for Aswin's removal. A vote of no confidence, however, is beyond the new law's bounds.[20] Predictably, PDI-P and the military/ police factions rejected the measure and a stalemate promptly ensued. Intense lobbying efforts by both sides in Jakarta followed, paralleled by escalating tensions in Pontianak.[21] On 10 October 2000, the central government finally announced Aswin's three options, all of which tended toward his ousting.[22] Two weeks later, a riot broke out.

The most proximate triggering event was a traffic accident between a bus and Malay moped driver that occurred on 25 October 2000 on Perintis Kemerdekaan

Avenue, the main thoroughfare connecting Pontianak proper and all arteries heading north and east.[23] A brief scuffle ensued. Almost immediately, mysterious yet strategically placed phone calls were made to certain Malay and Madurese figures who were informed that the other was set to attack, although the ethnicity of the bus driver and his assistant was never confirmed. The perfidiousness of rumour reared its ugly head once again.

A thousand or so people quickly converged at the site of the traffic accident. 'Madurese' from Siantan mobilized and congregated on the site's northern side.[24] Opposite (closer to the Kapuas Bridge) was the 'Malay' crowd, where yellow headbands bearing the name Ya-Qohar were prominent.[25] Sandwiched in between stood the police separating the two.

The next eight hours or so is best described as a stalemate. Accumulated tension climaxed at sundown when Abas's forces crossed the Kapuas Bridge into Pontianak proper to unleash the violence. They attacked Madurese *becak* drivers and burned dozens of the Madurese-owned kiosks that cram the Flamboyan market area adjacent to the Kapuas Bridge. That night, in which perhaps as many as six Madurese were hacked to death, Ato' Ismail, the head of PFKPM-Pontianak,[26] and associates distributed alcohol to embolden the rioters. Furthermore, Aswin was seen touring the town, surveying the damage and conversing with some leaders of the riot. As the sun rose the next morning, market-goers were greeted by hundreds of empty plastic bags of alcohol and boxes of take-out *(nasi bungkus)* littered about the area.

During this first day, the actions of security forces were strategically ambiguous.[27] The moment crowds gathered on Perintis Kemerdekaan Avenue, access to Pontianak north of Siantan was quickly sealed. Still, security forces stood by once night fell as crowds wreaked havoc unimpeded in the Flamboyan market area. Later that night, however, Abas-led forces were repelled from storming nearby refugee camps. Meanwhile, innumerable makeshift blockades were set up throughout the city, as thousands stood guard outside neighbourhoods to prevent the inadvertent spread of violence.

The next day, isolated fighting flared throughout the city, especially in market areas where Madurese traders were prominent. As Kijang jeeps circled Malay strongholds, alcohol, weapons (mostly machetes) and money were distributed. The riot's third day was mercifully its last. While sporadic clashes re-visited areas already afflicted, three companies of the mobile police brigades (Brimob) from Jakarta arrived to curb the violence. Shortly thereafter, Abas disappeared, perhaps fearing arrest. Altogether, the riot claimed about 40 lives, with Madurese victims accounting for some 35 of this total.

The riot's most conspicuous feature was its mobilizations. *Preman* networks led by Abas and Anafia—'the riot captains'[28]—that had coalesced to confront student demonstrators now assumed an unmistakable 'Malay' identity to exploit anti-Madurese sentiments and to serve Aswin's political interests. Nonetheless, as salient was the fact that, although thousands mobilized to guard neighbourhoods,

only a handful of people committed acts of aggression. Well aware of the executive-legislative tussle and the conspicuousness of the mobilizations, most residents rejected the violence.[29] In addition to the arrival of Brimob troops and Pontianak's manageable size, which makes it easy to cordon off, this refusal to participate dampened the riot's fury. All told, the riot was semi-organized and purposive. It did not turn Pontianak into an 'Ambon II', as many had feared; but it successfully silenced Aswin's legislative opponents. Following the unrest, DPRD I intransigence rapidly fizzled. Legislative efforts to depose Aswin halted.

Two final points concerning the Aswin debacle warrant mention. Locally, the tussle was not perceived in stark status quo versus reform terms. Certainly, Aswin unequivocally represented the New Order's legacy; yet, no one anointed his challengers as serious reformers. It was painfully obvious that few trusted them to solve the region's social ills for which Aswin was blamed. The way in which Aswin's legislative opponents handled this situation failed to inspire confidence in their abilities to create 'good governance,' the mantra of democracy and civil society advocates everywhere.[30]

Second, at the national level, this episode spotlighted the then President Abdurrahman Wahid's bumbling management of centre-periphery affairs.[31] Wahid's preoccupation with retaining power in Jakarta meant a neglect of the regions. Promises of reform were undermined by his appointment of the conservative (retired) Lt. Gen. Soerjadi Soerdirdja to head the powerful Interior Ministry. Throughout his tenure, Soerjadi held firm to the army's essentialist logic of the Indonesian state as a unitary republic with strong central government. His constant stonewalling of regional reform sparked the ire of the Minister of Regional Autonomy, Ryaas Rasyid, who eventually resigned.[32] For Aswin, Soerjadi's influence in Wahid's government was fortuitous and fortunate. They had been classmates at the National Military Academy in Magelang in 1963.

Refugees, relocation, riot

The city's economically and politically underprivileged—Madurese petty traders, *becak* drivers and kiosk owners—bore the disproportionate burden of the October riot. Another group of vulnerable Madurese—victims of the Sambas affair who had been housed in camps in Pontianak since early 1999—were likewise targeted, although the October orgy of violence did not involve the refugees per se. Instead, the refugee issue lay at the core of the city's cascading riots of June 2001. At the time, the violence was the apogee of a three-year saga of near catastrophic proportions, redolent of government corruption, ineptitude, intensifying urban economic competition and the further de-humanization of a victimized population.

The provincial government was content to feed and to shelter the Madurese IDPs until after the June 1999 elections, evidently to avoid 'unnecessary'

controversies that might, in turn, disrupt their implementation. By election time, nonetheless, some 85 children had succumbed to diseases contracted due to the camps' appalling conditions (*Pontianak Post* 14 June 1999). Following the elections, as noted above, the IDPs refused to be relocated to marshy, inhospitable sites some 30 miles south of Pontianak. They preferred to return to Sambas.[33] Leaving for Madura was never an option: some 97 per cent of the refugees were West Kalimantan born.[34] Neither could land-starved Madura accommodate a massive influx of newcomers.

The camps' insufferable conditions brought little public outcry and sympathy. Madurese are not considered native sons and, as was touched on previously, a belief persists that Madurese belligerence is the root cause of the chronic unrest.[35] Although women, children and the elderly comprised the majority of the refugees, they were uniformly stigmatized 'Madurese' and thus responsible for their wretched fate. This meant that few local refugee relief groups formed.[36] Local officials, who felt improvements to the camps' infrastructure would buoy spirits and provide incentives to prolong the refugees' stay, obstructed the efforts of international relief organizations. Thus, the camps' squalor was politically constructed.[37]

This decrepitude quickly gained social ramifications. With dishevelled facades and poor lighting, the areas surrounding the camps were soon deemed troubled and crime-infested. In essence, camps in central Pontianak with permeable yet recognizable boundaries became Madurese ghettoes. Local newspapers did their part by featuring crimes nearby the camps; whether or not the perpetrators were refugees was usually obscure.[38]

Members of the Madurese elite also failed the refugees. Noteworthy was the duplicity of Sulaiman, West Kalimantan's wealthiest and most visible Madurese figure. Head of the leading Madurese organization, IKAMRA, Sulaiman was an infamous Aswin champion.[39] He also held contracts to help construct the relocation sites.[40]

The presence of IDPs in Pontianak was a problem; the convenient combination of government incompetence, corruption and interests made it a crisis. Local officials inflated refugee rolls to increase the amount of central government subsidies circulating among their hands (*Kalimantan Review* September/October 2001). But corruption figured most prominently in the construction of the relocation sites. These projects would require thousands of new houses and miles of new roads, bridges and irrigation ditches. It was a treasure trove. Government departments fought amongst themselves for control of planning and construction. At the top of the bureaucracy sat Aswin. His thirst for development monies was unquenchable— for instance, he stalled central government plans to give the Sambas and Pontianak district governments Rp. 3 billion apiece in construction subsidies. Tellingly, Aswin insisted that the monies be channelled to the districts via provincial government conduits (*Pontianak Post* 29 January and 5 February 2000).

Construction monies vanished hand-over-fist. On-site investigations suggested that no more than one-quarter of budgeted construction costs for houses were actually used. Meanwhile, officials repeatedly falsified soil suitability reports. Again, the local press participated in this farce. It published pictures of proud Madurese settlers displaying their prodigious produce and ran disingenuous headlines like 'Refugees in Tebang Kacang are a Success' and '4000 Refugee Families want to be Relocated'.[41]

The refugee 'time-bomb' to which the local press and aid workers alluded finally exploded. On 23 June 2001, a robbery that went awry outside the *gedun olah raga* (GOR or sports complex) of IDP camps resulted in the death of a young boy. The perpetrators were four Madurese youths, although whether they were IDPs was unclear. It hardly mattered. Their ethnicity and the crime's location signified 'refugee' *(pengungsi)*.

Nearby locals mobilized at the GOR camps. The prominence of yellow among the crowd signified 'Malay'. A contingent of police officers kept them from invading the camps, but could not prevent the firebombing of the IDPs wooden shacks, hundreds of which were reduced to ashes. PFKPM gangs then spread the violence to sites affected by the October 2000 riot. In particular, they torched scores of kiosks and lynched two *becak* drivers in nearby Flamboyan market. This time, thankfully, the violence dissipated quickly.

In all, the June 2001 riot, was limited in scope and largely spontaneous, but exploded in a context of wider political and economic meaning. Rampant government corruption, intensifying economic competition between urban Madurese and Malays and raw ethnic sentiments were all factors.[42] Finally, in April 2002, a few months before Aswin's second (and final) term was to expire, a deal was reached whereby the refugee families would receive compensation to leave the camps.[43] A month later, refugees began leaving the camps to build new homes and lives on the outskirts of Pontianak of their own accord, a minor victory indeed.[44] A final cathartic explosion had been averted. However, while these Madurese are no longer in camps, they retain their IDP status until a safe return to Sambas is permitted.[45]

The urban dimensions of these two riots created an urgency among the province's elite to seek reconciliation, or at least to minimize the possibility of future outbreaks. Despite the massive size of the 1997 and 1999 incidents, for the provincial (Pontianak) elite, there was still a sense of disconnection to the semi-rural bloodshed. Moreover, no matter how extensive and horrendous, these affairs disturbed but did not destroy the provincial economy. As Pontianak loomed as the new locus of violence, however, the regional economy risked devastation. It would not survive a ransacking of Pontianak.[46]

With this in mind, elites sought to safeguard the gubernatorial succession. An ethnically based power-sharing accord was in place, but again, it was Aswin who prevailed.[47] While the new governor, Usman Djafar, is a Malay *putra daerah,* importantly, he does not hail from the DPRD I. He is a businessman who had been living in Jakarta. Moreover, the new Dayak vice-governor, L.H.Kadir, had

been a top Aswin assistant. Syamsumin, Golkar's candidate, finished a distant second in the December 2002 balloting.[48]

Concluding remarks

With the smooth gubernatorial succession and the freeing of refugees from the decrepitude and social stigma of the camps, post-riot politics in West Kalimantan show a cause for reserved optimism. The first inter-ethnic, elite dialogue on IDP return to Sambas was held in Singkawang in June 2002. The proverbial corner has yet to be turned, however. For one, it will take years, if ever, before the Madurese return to Sambas. Efforts to stymie their return will assuredly clash with the ideals reflected in the newly adopted second amendment to Indonesia's constitution. This states that each Indonesian citizen retains 'the right to choose a residence anywhere in Indonesia, the right to leave it and to return to it'. Regrettably, as one legal scholar pointed out, 'there is no tradition of respect for or enforcement of constitutional rights in Indonesia' (Bell 2001:33). What is more, with respect to the governorship, ultimately it matters little who controls this conduit of patronage. Without re-constituting government institutions eviscerated under the New Order, such as the judiciary and police force, citizens' belief and trust in government will dwindle further. In this way, current debate over the country's governing structure—unitary versus federal systems—is rendered premature (Sularto and Koekerits 1999). Quality and substance of government, in this case, should take precedence over its forms.

Still, despite the obvious need and desire for effective regional autonomy, Megawati's government had been determined to roll back gains made thus far. Along with the army, she held the unitary Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) sacred. Led by the powerful and military-dominant Interior Ministry under (retired) Lt. Gen. Hari Sabarno, her administration (at least publicly) had feared national disintegration if decentralization continues apace. While this alarmism may mask ulterior motives, their disquiet was unfounded in historical and contemporary contexts (Cribb 1999; Emmerson 2000). In contrast, *meaningful* decentralization, regardless of the mass violence it accentuates, may in the end strengthen the nation-state by rectifying New Order injustices.

To staunch decentralization's tide, one route taken by Megawati's administration was to reach out to provincial government and in particular governors, entities the then new regional autonomy laws largely by-passed. Ironically, one reason for designating the district level as the autonomous unit in the new laws was to preclude the formation of strong provinces. More plausibly, these units, rather than districts, would be able to challenge central government authority and subsequently give rise to separatism. From a regional viewpoint, however, one lesson learned from the Pontianak riots of October 2000 is that regional elites never did consider the law to its letter. Decentralization has precipitated a rash of troubled elections across the country over *bupati* posts, whose power and prestige have been significantly enhanced. Few, however,

naively believed that governors would be reduced to mere, patronage-less referees *(wasit)* as powers were devolved to the district level. Devolving powers to the district level, provincial elites have insisted in interviews, requires time and guidance. A scourge of 'technical issues' justifying its impediment is likely.

I have argued that regional power struggles resulting from a decentralizing state are an appropriate context in which to situate Indonesia's recent spate of regional violence. While this has bearing on the political significance of the 'rise of the local' (van Klinken 2000) at district *and* provincial levels, findings from this case demonstrate that the political dynamics of mass violence demand careful study. Popular incendiary theories of strife like provocateurs (Kingsbury 2003), the army and neo-primordialism require qualification.

Still, conclusions drawn from other studies of collective violence complement the evidence presented above. Historical perspectives that illuminate processes of ethnic categorization as a result of state policy and structural factors like imbalanced in-migration are telling. Notable as well are the politicization of ethno-religious identities and the role of youth militias, acting on their own accord or on behalf of the powers that be. In particular, presented as a slight alternative to both the rapid democratization and competitive electoral frameworks, I linked the mechanisms of violence to regional power struggles in the context of decentralization. By doing so, I tried to show how these riots rarely concern settling old scores and similar 'return of the repressed' repercussions. Rather, they are implicated in a swiftly changing political landscape; they invoke an uneasy present and an insecure future. Anxiety over the indeterminacy and fluidity of today's political climate compounds the problem.

Admittedly, the new laws stopped short of full decentralization. Their implementation can be easily stonewalled through ensuing government regulation. But discounting the impact of decentralization in the regions would be disingenuous and typify a Jakarta-centric viewpoint. Material gains for regional elites will be substantial. As significant, recent violence in West Kalimantan acutely illustrates that, beside material considerations, the symbolic meaning of decentralization resonates powerfully. Its force has unleashed spiralling ethnocentrism and heightened the dehumanization of irksome 'outsiders'. Claims to indigeneity, demands for *putra daerah* leadership, re-drawn districts along communal lines, ethno-religious cleansings and IDP crises are manifestations of this charge.

Finally, I close on a note of policy reform. That regional executives are to be directly elected is positive. To give the local its political significance worthy of a decentralizing state, however, and in part to shield it from the vicissitudes of national politicking, elections for local and national offices should be separated as much as possible. Substantively, staggering elections would make a regional elite more beholden to its local constituency and help to generate the downward accountability essential for effective decentralization (Agrawal and Ribot 1999). Concurrent elections will perpetuate the centre's domination of the

local, while the putatively empowered electorate would be left to elect its leaders once every five years. Both are reminiscent of New Order practice.

Notes

1 Michael Montesano and Billy Nessen read parts of this essay; I thank Maribeth Erb for kindly and keenly commenting on its entirety.
2 Although military and separatist related violence has been prevalent in Papua, Mote and Rutherford (2001) point out that in the post-Suharto state incidents resembling ethnic riots have risen markedly.
3 This section is largely based on the arguments put forth in Davidson (2003).
4 MAMB consciously modelled itself on the previously formed Dayak *Majelis Adat* (customary board).
5 Malays are Muslims who speak a Borneo Malay variant as their main language. Upriver Malays are doubtless descendants of Dayaks who converted to Islam. Although it was once believed that coastal Malays were migrants from Sumatra or the Malay Peninsula, observers have come to doubt this migration hypothesis (Collins 2001).
6 Their numbers remained too low to upset balances in the district assembly and Madurese leaders could not legitimately challenge for *bupati* or vice-*bupati* positions in the foreseeable future.
7 On 16 March a Dayak (Martinus Amat) was killed outside Pemangkat. Dubious eyewitness accounts finger Madurese attackers, claims Madurese leaders refute. Nonetheless, this murder triggered Dayak involvement which caused the violence to spread and grow.
8 In Bengkayang, most Madurese were forced to the coast in and around Singkawang. At the time, Singkawang was still part of Bengkayang district. Some since have moved back, although this is more prominent in urban than rural locales. There is talk of constructing a massive permanent relocation site outside Singkawang.
9 Not all IDPs were in Pontianak's camps. Perhaps as many as 10,000 were shipped to camps in East Java and Madura; an equal number found lodging in Pontianak. Of the latter, those better-off rented accommodation while others found shelter with family or friends. Also, not all refugees were Madurese. Dayak, Javanese, Bugis and Malay spouses were present as well.
10 As of mid-2001, only 500 or so families were resettled in the marshy, inhospitable sites. According to United Nations' regulations, evacuees must cross international borders to be designated as refugees. For this chapter, however, I use the terms IDP and refugee interchangeably to reflect the predominant Indonesian usage, *pengungsi* (refugee).
11 Malay (and some Dayak) elites in Sambas have steadfastly rejected a Madurese return.
12 Some student groups loosely aligned in an umbrella organization, Forum Kapuas, were: The Movement of Indonesian Islamic Students; Association of Indonesian Catholic Students; Movement of Indonesian National Students; Union of Muhammadiyah Students; Associations of Chinese Students; and the Association of Islamic Students.

13 When first appointed in 1993, Aswin was a Brigadier General. Before retiring, he was promoted to Major General. From 1986 to 1988, he served as Commander of Military Resort 121 (in Sintang). Before being appointed governor, Aswin was vice-governor in Bali. Although a non-local, he was still first the non-Javanese governor in West Kalimantan under the New Order. He hails from Samarinda, East Kalimantan.

14 It should be noted that while some political parties voiced support for native son leadership, none advocated Aswin's removal during the 1999 campaign. Suharto's resignation had failed to spark a chain-reaction in the provinces; governors (and *bupati*) remained entrenched in their positions. So, without the aid of precedent, local politicians in West Kalimantan were not yet ready to renounce Aswin, their patron.

15 In the DPRD I, Golkar held 14 seats, while the PDI-P had 11. The five dissenting factions combined for 38 of the assembly's 55 seats.

16 Article 45 (subsection 1) of law no. 22/99 uses the term 'accountability' *(pertanggungjawaban)*. If rejected, according to Article 46, the relevant regional executive is given 30 days to present a rectified version. If rejected a second time, the assembly 'recommends impeachment' *(mengusulkan pemberhentiannya)* to the President. Important here is the attempt to hold regional executives accountable to the interests of the region they serve rather than to the centre, as was standard practice under the New Order.

17 Alarmed that numerous legislative assemblies were plotting to impeach regional executives via the rejection of accountability speeches, the central government urgently tried to staunch the tide. In memos sent out to all legislative assemblies, the then Minister of Regional Autonomy, Ryaas Rasyid, insisted that 'annual reports' *(laporan tahunan)* were not means to dismiss regional executives. See *Kompas* 20 June 2000. In fact, in the newly revised law on regional government (law 32/2004) the accountability reports of regional executives are no longer mandated. In fact, as stipulated in the newly-revised law on regional government (law 32/2004), rejecting accountability reports is no longer a means to impeach a regional executive.

18 The UNTAN student newspaper lists a series of aggressive acts committed against students. See *Mimbar Untan,* 4th edition, 2000. In the same paper, see also Abas's engaging interview, 'Kami Bukan Preman…!' ['We are not Thugs…!'].

19 In the main, these martial arts centres extort from local Chinese-owned natural-resource extraction companies in the form of security and protection. Abas claimed to have some 70 underlings *(anak buah)* posted at Bumi Raya Utama, Benua Indah, Kayu Mukti and Batasan Ltd. Interview, Abas Fadhilah, 14 May 2001, Pontianak. Al-Faqar was alleged to provide security at the Lyman Group, Rimba Ramin, Liberty and New Kalbar Processor. On the *Pemuda Pancasila,* see Ryter (1998).

20 Assembly members chose this extra-legal route for two reasons. First, law no. 22/1999 was not to take effect until 1 January 2001. Until then, it was a lame duck. So, they saw a vote of no-confidence as an immediate, stop-gap measure. Second, it was doubtful whether they had reasonable grounds to reject the report's content. The assembly members never held a meeting to discuss the report's findings and a few admitted to never having read the report. Aswin's office shrewdly produced a cumbersome and complicated tome to digest and analyse. Such reports under the

New Order averaged 300 or so pages. This one totalled more than 1,500, including appendices.

21 Many of those flown to Jakarta to argue Aswin's case were from rural districts. See *Equator* 15 September and 22 September 2000.

22 The three options were: (1) resign *(berhenti sendiri),* (2) be recalled to Jakarta *(ditarik ke pusat),* or (3) be impeached via existing mechanisms *(diberhentikan sesuai dengan mekanisme yang berlaku)*. See *Pontianak Post* 11 October 2000.

23 Maryadi, then a *detik.com* journalist, and (ex)-student activists in *Tim Pencipta Damai* covered these events superbly, including the drawing of connections among diverse parties and interests. Perintis Kemerdekaan Avenue has since been re-named Sultan Hamid II Avenue.

24 The region's primary transport hub (Batu Layang) is located in Siantan, northern Pontianak, a Madurese stronghold. Madurese dominate the city's transport sector.

25 The quotes draw attention to the mixed characteristics of the crowds, although 'Malay' and 'Madurese' is how they became perceived, thus providing fodder for the escalation of violence.

26 Following the Sambas riots, FKPM and other new groups formed a province-wide organization, The Union of Malay Youth Communication Forums (PFKPM), which then opened branches in several urban centres. It should be noted that the low number of fatalities this first night was due to the methodical build-up of tensions that afforded most Madurese who work or trade in the area time to leave.

27 At this point, they comprised local forces, including two companies (SSK) of provincial police Special Forces (Perintis), two companies of city police, and one company of the Mobil Brigade (Brimob). According to field reports, they were aided *(dibantu)* and backed-up by local army forces. In addition, hundreds of rather conspicuous plainclothesmen were deployed.

28 This term is borrowed from Tambiah (1996:99).

29 Several banners hung around the city read: 'This is a Conflict-Free Area. We love peace.' *(Kawasan Bebas Konflik. Kami Warga Cinta Damai);* 'An All-Ethnic Peace Zone' *(Kawasan Damai Semua Suku);* and 'We Will Not be Provoked by Certain Instigators' *(Kami Takkan Terprovokasi oleh Hasutan Oknum Tertentu)*.

30 Consonant with the New Order evisceration of local leadership, the fact that there were no clear alternatives to Aswin compounded the problem.

31 Wahid's flip-flopping with regard to Papua had deadly consequences. See Mote and Rutherford (2001). Furthermore, the number of troops dispatched to the regions increased under Wahid's watch (Kammen 2003).

32 On Rasyid's frustrations, see his interview, *Tempo* 10 December 2000.

33 A survey conducted by a local Madurese organization in April 1999 found that 60 per cent wanted to return to Sambas. See *Akcaya* 23 April 4 1999. Two years later, a survey I conducted with the help of the Madurese student organization HIMMA showed similar results. 66 per cent (73 out of 110) wanted to return to Sambas; 31 per cent were keen on remaining in Pontianak; 2 per cent chose relocation; and 1 per cent selected Madura as a preferred destination.

34 These are the results of the aforementioned survey.

35 Aswin publicly pinned the violence on the Madurese. See *Akcaya* 10 April 1999 and *detik.com* website, 9 April 1999.

36 Islamic student groups made Herculean efforts to provide necessities to the refugees upon arrival. These were emergency measures and the students lacked the

resources to sustain the effort. Later they raised sufficient funds to send some 100 children to Islamic boarding schools *(pesantren)* in Java. A multi-ethnic collaboration of 15 NGOs had formed an aid organization (LSM Peduli Kalbar). The effort was listless and accomplished little.

37 On hand from the outset, Médecins Sans Frontières became the main pillar of non-governmental assistance. Projects concentrated on upgrading infrastructure like sanitation rather than food distribution.

38 For example, see *Equator* 17 July 2000, which includes a photo of a refugee camp, and *Pontianak Post* 15 November 2000.

39 Accusations of Sulaiman's support of Aswin and his role in the October riots created a storm in the Madurese community. At a reconciliation meeting immediately following the riots, Sulaiman's leadership was seriously queried. For accusations of Madurese leadership seeking material gain out of the refugee crisis, see Petebang and Sutrisno (2000:30–31).

40 His enthusiasm for relocation could be gleaned from statements made in the press—for example, '[relocation] is a policy we respect and we put our full trust in the provincial government to carry it out'. See *Kompas* 22 April 1999.

41 See *Pontianak Post* 3 June 2001. These misleading headlines are from *Equator* 24 February and 9 March 2001. The national daily *Kompas* was not above the muck either. See the photos (with captions like *subur* [fertile] and *makin membaik* [getting better]) in *Kompas* 13 July 2001.

42 Malay elite protested that male IDPs working on construction sites were stealing jobs from Malays. Meanwhile, children from the camps sold newspapers on street corners while hundreds of women were trucked to work in factories on Pontianak's periphery.

43 According to Syamsuddin, formerly a well-to-do businessman from Sambas, an IDP and head of The Victims of Sambas's Social Violence Foundation (YKSS)—the organization that represented the IDPs in negotiations—roughly 7,000 families were accounted for in Pontianak (in and outside the camps). Families in camps were granted Rp. 5 million apiece, while those in resettlement sites received half this amount, based on the value of the houses they had been given. In total, the (central) government handed out some Rp. 45 billion. What percentage of the estimated 62,000 people were original refugees is not clear. Syamsuddin stated that provincial officials did not in earnest try to resolve the IDP issue until a meeting in Jakarta in September 2001 with government ministers. For one, government funding had run dry for the resettlement sites. Thus, conceptions of the refugees as a 'project' *(proyek)* were no longer feasible. Interview with Syamsuddin, Pontianak, 18 July 2002.

44 Moreover, government officials also could no longer hold to the fiction that these sites were suitable for securing a livelihood. There was no choice but to accept relocation on Pontianak's fringes. Initially, there were a few reported cases of arson attacks on new IDP houses, including the razing of some 60 houses west of Pontianak on 12 July 2002. To my knowledge, there have been no repeat occurrences since this incident.

45 It appears that the refugees finally acquiesced once vice-president and native son to West Kalimantan, Hamzah Haz, visited Pontianak to help broker a deal. See *Kalimantan Review* August 2002.

46 This fear was not wholly urban either. Pontianak is the linchpin for the distribution of goods throughout the vast province and in the short two to three days during which the October riots paralysed Pontianak, shortages in the countryside were noticeable. Prices soared. The then recent Dayak—Madurese bloodshed of 2001 in neighbouring Central Kalimantan provided a haunting lesson of what could happen when a region's primary distribution centre is destroyed. For months following the riots, citizens of upland Central Kalimantan suffered through famine-like conditions. News reports disingenuously blamed shortages on drought-induced low rivers. See *Kompas* 18 July 2001.

47 Previously, an informal, elite Malay-Dayak power-sharing deal had been struck. For district levels, *bupati/vice-bupati* candidacies would contain a Malay or a Dayak in one or other position to ensure balanced representation. The then recent *bupati* elections in Sintang, Ketapang, Kapuas Hulu and Landak districts reflected this compromise. Moreover, because a Dayak (Oevaang Oeray) held the governorship prior to the New Order (1960–66), Malay elites insisted it was time for West Kalimantan to have its first Malay *putra daerah* governor.

48 As significant, Djafar is close to vice-president and national head of PPP, Hamzah Haz. Haz visited Pontianak days prior to the election to lobby for Djafar. Tellingly, PPP controlled only six out of the 45 seats in the provincial assembly.

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Part III

Regional autonomy and the environment

11
Striving for self-governance and democracy
The continuing struggle of the integrated pest management farmers[1]

Yunita T.Winarto

Introduction

This chapter has grown out of research conducted over more than a decade on the integrated pest management (IPM) agricultural programme. This programme, designed as an alternative to 'green revolution' technology, and introduced in the later part of the twentieth century to various parts of Asia and Africa, was initiated in Indonesia in the early 1990s. This was a time when people in Indonesia were already beginning to voice protests about the repressive, highly centralized, paternalistic government of the New Order of then President Suharto. One of the characteristics of the New Order period (1966–98), was over-regulation and the excessive intervention of the state; one of the programmes that was rigorously enforced during the New Order was agricultural development by means of 'green revolution' technology. The 'green revolution' has increasingly come under criticism for the way it has promoted the profit of businesses at the expense of farmers, and for the way it has led to a significant degradation of farm resources (see for example, Shiva 1993, 1997). In addition local users, often the owners of the resources, ended up being marginalized in their own 'lands'. They did not have the right to make decisions or freely exercise their own management strategies. Addressing this problem, the IPM programmes in Indonesia and other countries in Asia and Africa attempted to place farmers' empowerment, self-governance, learning capacity and knowledge enrichment as the main objectives to achieve, rather than high crop productivity and intensive use of technology. There has been more of a focus on local spaces and communities that marks:

> a shift from the preoccupation with centralized, overarching, and overreaching solutions of the past decades that have failed to reverse and may indeed have contributed to environmental problems and attendant social tensions
>
> Agrawal (2000:57)

In 1998, with economic chaos and demands for reform more strident, President Suharto stepped down, the New Order ended and an official era of 'reform' was inaugurated. Part of this reform was plans to usher in a more democratic process of decision making in important areas of Indonesian life; a process that was supposed to lead to a more 'bottom-up' decision-making process, as opposed to the 'top-down' procedures that had become the norm during the New Order period. Community-based decision making was at the heart of the IPM programme from the beginning, and, even during the authoritative New Order, some progress was made in empowering farmers to be experts and managers in their own lands (Dilts and Hate 1996; Winarto 1996; Winarto *et al.* 2000).

The Indonesian government officially launched greater regional autonomy in January 2001. Before and after the launching of its legislation, various parties criticized the contents of law no. 22/1999, the legal foundation of regional autonomy in Indonesia. However, very few of those critiques refer to the lack of a social-cultural dimension. The legislation does not strongly incorporate a 'culture of democracy' as the basic foundation of the regulations (Saifuddin 2001). How this 'culture of democracy' should be established, sustained and developed in the era of regional autonomy has not yet been thoroughly addressed. The question is whether there has been or will be a strong effort by the regional autonomy government, unlike the New Order government, to provide greater room for 'civil society' to flourish. Will the 'reformed' regional autonomy government provide greater space for local people to negotiate freely with one another? Will this decentralization have significant implications for farmers' efforts to empower themselves? Will farmers gain the benefit of having greater autonomy in their own 'niche'?

It is within the context of reform and decentralization that I want to address these questions, specifically as they are related to the IPM programme and the farmers who adopted this programme before and after 'reform'. Has regional autonomy, which is supposed to be fostering the kinds of local and community-based participation that characterizes programmes such as IPM, furthered the spread of these programmes? Has the government been more enthusiastic in aiding farmers in alternative agricultural paradigms that are less 'top-down'? I will show in this chapter that the situation is not so simple, and that the context of decentralization and autonomy poses some challenges to those who are involved in the IPM programme, just as was the case under the New Order. However there are some encouraging signs in terms of the ability of farmers to 'organize' themselves and create networks to encourage and aid other farmers. Therefore various forms of collective action among farming communities are now being found, both at the very local level, the hamlet and/or the village, and at the higher one, with networks between farming communities at the district, region, province and national level. The second concern in this chapter, therefore, is to look at diverse levels of collective action and analyse which one is effective in fostering farmers' empowerment, and in what kinds of situations.

Referring to recent arguments on the effectiveness of collective action among local users, Constanza *et al.* (2001) say that cooperation is likely under specific conditions, that is where the number of actors is smaller rather than larger, interactions are repeated, and actors are able to detect cheating and punish offenders. This argument has been widely adopted as the underlining premise in various programmes to assist local users in creating and developing social institutions and collective action. Agrawal (2000), on the other hand, questions the presumption that smaller groups are more successful than larger ones. On the basis of his research findings among the forest councils of Kumaon, in the Himalayas, Agrawal (2000: 18) argues that: 'councils with a larger membership find it easier to organize successfully for collective action, and the smaller councils face difficulties in organizing successfully'. In this chapter I shall argue for a more situational approach. Both smaller and larger groups can organize themselves successfully, depending on the different 'niches' and scale of problems that each size group has to face. It is also necessary to look at the extent to which both the small and the large groups are related to one another, and how they can fill the gap that each has in carrying out their aims and efforts in developing social institutions.

I shall examine both of these issues, the question of regional autonomy and collective action, with reference to farmers who have been trained in the Integrated Pest Management 'school without walls' in West Java and Central Lampung, Sumatra. To understand the situation the farmers in Indonesia are now facing, I shall first discuss the nature of the conflicting interests found in the New Order era between green revolution technology and IPM, and again in the recent regional autonomy era. Second, I shall examine cases of farmers' self-governance, among local users at the village level, and in the form of farmers' alliances in a larger, national network. The two groups, which are in fact related to one another, are not only different in terms of scale, but also in terms of their basis of collaboration. Farmers themselves differentiate the village level group as a 'grassroots' one or *kelompok basis,* and the larger one as a 'network' group or *kelompok jaringan*. In this case, *kelompok basis* becomes the basic unit of *kelompok jaringan*.

Conflicting interests: green revolution and IPM

Despite various critiques on the paradigm of the green revolution and its implementation (Fox 1991; Shiva 1993, 1997), it is a reality that the state governments of many developing countries, including Indonesia, continue to carry out agricultural development programmes on the basis of the green revolution paradigm. The 'cotton seeds engineering technology', which was carried out in South Sulawesi in Indonesia in 2000–2001 and which apparently failed, was concrete evidence of the type of failures the state government can produce when they force farmers to cultivate biogenetically engineered seeds. This is a representation of the kind of hegemonic power that can continue, even

in the context of regionalization and 'democratization', when the central government, in collaboration with private companies, impose their will upon local farmers. The farmers did not have much room to speak out against the state's intervention, and they were placed in a submissive position to receive and implement the 'technological package' and its production inputs. This is a mirror of the kind of experience that rice farmers in Indonesia have had over the past three decades. As one old farmer in West Java recollected of the significant change he experienced after the introduction of 'government seeds' *(padi pemerintah),* 'Everything was governed by the state'.

At the time I began my research on the IPM programme in the early 1990s, planting 'government seeds', using inorganic fertilizers and spraying pesticides had been part of the farmers' cultivation strategy for several decades. At that time the farmers' objective was to obtain high yields. Over time, the government's objective of producing as high a yield as possible had gradually become the farmers' own aim. This was so, even though these yields meant incurring high expenses. The farmers' increased dependency on production inputs, which benefited the government or private companies, was expressed in their own stories:

> At the time the government forced us to use *urea* (nitrogen), we refused adamantly by throwing the fertilizers into the streams. Why did we have to use *urea*? Our paddy grew well without that fertilizer. But, now, without applying *urea,* our paddy cannot grow well. We are now searching for (dependent on) *urea,* and we will find it everywhere even if the fertilizers' delivery comes late.

At the end of 1998, however, with the Indonesian economy in severe crisis, the central government decided to increase the price of fertilizers sharply. This was followed by the absence of fertilizers on the market, and the very late delivery of fertilizers associated with the credit package scheme. The result was total chaos for the farmers, who had become dependent on this technological package. This 'panic' situation reveals two things:

1 the green revolution's 'success' in turning farmers into objects and dependents of the state's policy and of the business enterprises' programmes
2 the state's negation of the farmers' own needs, situations and interests.

In the farmers' own words, they were marginalized and placed as 'second class citizens', and had to accept the unjust situation (Hidayat and Adinata 2001). 'That was a period of [our] stupidity *(masa pembodohan)*', recalled some farmers in Central Lampung (Winarto *et al.* 1999). In such a situation, 'grumbling' was part of the farmers' daily conversations. Nevertheless, they were powerless to speak or act. This was the situation the IPM programme wanted to counter, so as to enable them to analyse their own situation critically,

make their own decisions confidently, and speak out strongly and act against any unwise recommendations.

Through the integrated pest management farmer field school (IPM FFS), farmers were taught to be critical of the existing condition of their own fields, and to take actions according to their empirical observations and analyses. By becoming 'experts' on the basis of their own discoveries and ideas, the IPM farmers were expected to be able to argue for their own decisions and practices, and argue against the inappropriate recommendations and instructions provided by outsiders. Knowledge improvement, dignity and self-reliance were expected to be products of the IPM programme and the field school, and not just the tangible outcomes in terms of harvest yields. The most apparent consequence of such a training and facilitation was the greater courage the farmers now have in taking decisions that are not always in line with the government's recommendations. In fact, farmers have gained an understanding about the actions behind the scene, that reinforce the implementation of the recommended technological package, or any new products released by both the state and the business enterprises. In the post-IPM era, I have observed significant differences in the farmers' courage in voicing their arguments, both in interaction with outsiders and themselves.

As a further consequence, the previously 'hidden and suppressed conflicts' have come to the fore and are more openly discussed between farmers and other related parties. In relation to the main theme of discussion in the post-IPM FFS, and the objectives of the programme to change the paradigm of controlling pests and disease, the use of pesticides has been the major issue in the debate, discussion and argument between farmers, government agencies and producers. Soon after the first batch of farmers in a hamlet on the north coast of West Java joined the field school in 1990, conflicts occurred when those IPM farmers were forced to accept a complete credit package scheme without any flexibility, with the pesticides in the package. Not only did the green revolution's paradigm and the recommended package persist, but the same person who facilitated the IPM farmers attendance at the field school, the extension worker, urged the farmers to comply with the government's credit package scheme (Winarto 1996). As a result, the farmers were confused over the conflicting policies within the government agencies themselves.

In 1999, almost a decade after the introduction of IPM, the same argument recurred in another place. The IPM farmers in Central Lampung argued for a change in the existing policy of not allowing farmers to receive the credit package without pesticides, or for example to receive the package in the form of money instead of the product (Winarto *et al.* 2000). However what had changed in the government policy, as compared to the early 1990s, was that instead of forcing farmers to accept whatever brand of pesticides was provided in the credit package scheme (see Winarto 1996), in the later years farmers were allowed to choose the brand of pesticide they wanted to use. In fact the use of pesticides continues to be ideologically reinforced by agricultural officers when they talk

about the use of pesticides in the 'reform era' in Indonesia. Government officers talk about 'disciplined reform' or *'reformasi tapi harus disiplin,'* referring to how reform must be within certain limits, and at a moderate pace. Agricultural officers use this idea of 'discipline' however, not so much to support 'reform', but to support the continued use of pesticides, which they referred to as 'medicines', in a disciplined way. Farmers are advised to be disciplined in 'preparing the "medicines" if there are pests that attack their plants'.

These phenomena reveal the persisting paradigm of the green revolution, where farmers are placed as the 'targets' of the government's programmes and various enterprises' marketing policies, despite the legislation that supports reform and community empowerment. When I visited my field site on the north coast of West Java in 1998, soon after the outbreak of brown plant hopper, the farmers told me a story about the role the previous IPM facilitator, a pest observer, had taken. He aided chemical companies in promoting the use of various brands of pesticide through practical applications in the farmers' own fields. This event was planned to show the effectiveness of various brands of insecticide in 'killing' the brown plant hopper. In late 2001, some IPM farmers told me of a recent field school that was actually run by a pesticide company. Companies have been clever in trying to undercut the IPM programme, by using the programme itself as a medium through which to market their pesticide products. This was thus obscuring the fact that these field schools are where the farmers are supposed to be learning how to stop using pesticides when at all possible. What they did was suggest the use of chemical pesticides in moderation; if they were needed then the product that would be offered would be that of the sponsor that funded the field school. Thus the farmers continue to be the 'targets' of recommendations, policies and actions, even in their 'modified' forms after *reformasi*. Hence it is possible to ask the question whether, despite the legislation of autonomy at the regency level since early 2001, farmers have actually experienced more freedom than in the pre-regional autonomy era in terms of exercising their own decisions, and not becoming the targets of various interests.

Regional autonomy: constraints and opportunities

'*KKN (Korupsi-Kolusi-Nepotisme) di pusat sekarang diotodakan* (the KKN at the centre is now being decentralized/regionalized)', expressed a member of staff of FIELD Indonesia[2] in Jakarta to show how the 'chronic disease of corruption-collusion-nepotism' is being spread throughout the country via the policy of regional autonomy *(otonomi daerah)*. What does this evident spread mean for the farmers' life and prosperity? 'Farmers are now becoming the targets of the regional government to earn money as much as possible', continued the FIELD Indonesia staff member. The conflicts of interest are not declining; in fact they are increasing, with new kinds of conflicts. For example, farmers are now forced to pay fees to use water, the most important resource for the growth of their

plants (Wienarto, personal communication 2002). A decade earlier a programme introducing payment for water was first run as an experiment among some farming communities in West Java. Now, such a programme is a source of 'wealth', and a new focus of corruption among the local official agencies. It has been a growing tendency that farmers are being co-opted by various parties, including the regional government, the private producers and even the regional political parties.

As alluded to above, the prominent actors in agriculture, the agricultural officials, are still carrying out the paradigm of the green revolution. At the regency level, they are organized at the *dinas pertanian* (the agricultural office), and they promote programmes to improve agricultural productivity through the implementation of a technological package and recommendations. The administrative agencies, the head of the regency *(bupati)* and the regional parliament (*dewan perwakilan raykat daerah*—DPRD) have a broader perspective now than in the past, with their programmes to develop the regions and local people, including farmers. It is much easier to deal with them in recent times, because of regional autonomy, and they are more willing to listen to farmers' voices, interests and problems. However, it is clear there are still some 'hidden agendas' that have to be examined with scepticism—in particular, whether or not the regional political parties support farmers' activities. Also, business people have to improve their way of approaching farmers. The way they conduct the IPM field schools is one example. In one case, a field school for chilli farmers was conducted by a chemical company which introduced its own product for controlling pests that infest chilli crops. Also NGOs (non-government organizations) often invite farmers to collaborate with them. However, many of the NGOs carry out their programmes under the umbrella of a 'project', in which farmers' groups are claimed as the objects of their 'stewardship', for which they receive funding from international agencies. Farmers remain the target of various groups who are attempting to profit from them.

Despite the persisting conflict of interests, some farmers have seen the positive aspects of their recent situation, which is after the introduction of IPM, after the calls for 'reform', and within the context of the regional autonomy era. For example the implementation of the crops intensification package has gradually slowed down, and is not as intensive as before. Farmers have greater courage to voice their problems, constraints and complaints. Officials now appreciate farmers more than in previous times. 'Now, they do not dare to show off their power', said an IPM farmer. 'If before they were serious in determining the targets *(main target),* now they are different', added the same farmer, a representative of the IPM farmers' network (*Ikatan Petani Pengendalian Hama Terpadu*—IPPHT). The major significant differences felt by many farmers are the changes in their own ability to analyse critically the existing condition of and problems in their fields and habitat, and to speak up and decide what they need in line with the local conditions. Many farmers relate this ability to the introduction of IPM through the farmers' field school. The IPM farmers in Central Lampung say that

the era after the introduction of IPM is the 'period of enlightenment and becoming smarter' in contrast to the 'period of stupidity' during the green revolution era (Winarto *et al.* 1999; Winarto 2002).

In relation to the more relaxed situation under regional autonomy, farmers have felt that the gap between them and the regional government now is 'smaller' than before. They can voice their problems directly to the head of the regency, the *bupati,* and his/her administrative officials. Before, they could only voice their problems via the farmers' groups, who reported to the intermediaries, the extension workers *(petugas penyuluh lapangan),* who later communicated their problems to those in the various *dinas pertanian,* that is to the agricultural officials at the higher level, the 'sub-district' *(kecamatan)* and then up to the regency level *(kabupaten)*. At present, the regional governments in some regencies listen to farmers' advice and suggestions, or involve them in drafting policies in agriculture (Suhartono, personal communication 2002). The FIELD Indonesia staff say that some *bupati* are very responsive to farmers' problems. The *bupati* of Brebes, Lumajang and Ngawi in Central and East Java are examples of those who protect farmers' needs. They defend farmers from excessive exposure to promotion by chemical companies, and support their desire to produce 'crops free of pesticides' *(tanaman bebas pestisida)*. A few *bupati* in other places have also provided some financial support for farmers' programmes, for example to conduct IPM farmer field schools or other projects in a number of villages in their regions. Nevertheless, there are also some *bupati* and *dinas pertanian* officers who refuse to support farmers. In their eyes, farmers often create problems by voicing their protests frequently and are 'too far from the right track' *(kebablasan)* (Wienarto, personal communication, 2002).

In the midst of these constraints and opportunities, it is important to examine how farmers empower themselves using various collectivities at different levels, both at the grassroots level and via more extensive networks that reach up to higher levels. I shall examine in the next section how farmers have collaborated at various levels to respond to opportunities and difficulties, by looking at the IPM farmers in Central Lampung and the national alliance of the IPM farmers that has developed in the past several years since the time of 'reform'.

Self-governance in the village: *Wakak Jukok,* Central Lampung

'*Wakak Jukok artinya akar rumput* (*Wakak Jukok* [literally] means grassroots)', explained an IPM farmer from Karang Endah, Central Lampung during his presentation at an international symposium in 2001. The farmers themselves chose terms originating from their region, Lampung, that would be appropriate to represent their organization as a 'grassroots' one, and to identify their efforts in empowering themselves. This is an example of the farmers' ability to self-organize and to create social institutions after receiving intensive training from NGO facilitators. These NGOs had helped the farmers to run the IPM FFS in the

first place, adopting the national curriculum developed by the IPM experts for the national IPM programmes in the early 1990s.

Farmers are indeed creative. By experiencing the advantages gained from such a 'school', where they were trained to be good observers, critical thinkers and able decision makers, they expanded the school to cover not only rice cultivation strategies, but also the secondary crops (soybean and later on chilli). They also managed to develop the curriculum of their IPM 'school' for those crops. Not only that, the farmers learned from problems encountered in the national IPM FFS and the way they facilitated their participants after one planting season (see the story of the first batch of the IPM farmers in Subang, West Java in Winarto 1996). They realized from this the difficulties and constraints in changing their own and fellow farmers' perspectives and schema interpretations in a relatively short period of time.

The most difficult thing they faced was changing their entire schema of interpretation in controlling pests and diseases. They had to turn the meaning of pesticides as 'medicines' *(obat)* into 'poison' *(racun)*. They also had to change their customary practices, from spraying 'medicines' regularly to protect the plants from getting 'sick', into managing the growth of crops on the basis of observation and an agro-ecosystem analysis. Understanding this new paradigm was not easy. Trying to incorporate it into their existing schema of interpretation was constrained by contradictions between the two paradigms. The new abstract concepts were also difficult to accept and understand without empirical evidence. Furthermore, putting it into practice was more difficult because they lacked confidence and belief in the new strategy's efficacy. The continuous promotion of the use of pesticides by various parties through diverse means inhibited the growth of confidence in the new paradigm. When they had to disseminate the new schema of interpretation to their fellow farmers who were ignorant of the new understanding, they felt helpless without strong support from outsiders and fellow IPM farmers. In addition to these constraints, they also had to face continuous pest and disease outbreaks (Winarto *et al.* 2000).

Despite such inhibiting circumstances, the first batches of IPM farmers were still motivated to change their knowledge and practices. Stimulated by their strong enthusiasm and their aim of achieving prosperity through better and healthier ways of growing crops, several IPM farmers were able to consolidate themselves through closer collaboration. With help of an outside facilitator, they established a formal organization to assist their collective action. This organization is not the same as the previous one formed through the extension workers' and the local government officials' enforcement. The farmers themselves defined the organization's goals, programmes and rules of conduct, including the criteria by which people were chosen as representatives, farmers' trainers and coordinators.

During my fieldwork in 1998–99, and my brief visit in 2001, the representatives of the farmers' organization were actively designing and implementing various programmes.[3] They also continuously evaluated the

effectiveness of their work and made changes to the structure of the organization. By renting a room as an 'office' at one of the farmers' house, they met frequently to discuss, plan and evaluate their activities. The 'office' became the centre of information and the place of consultation, discussion and farmers' meetings. Different from the other farmers' groups on the north coast of West Java, the *Wakak Jukok* group was very dynamic and lively. It was like a solid nucleus, which then gradually spread its network outwards.

The core programme of the group was conducting the field school for rice, soybean and chilli in every planting season, for a number of farmers' groups spread over several villages in two neighbouring districts. The organizers believed that, without the growing number of farmers joining the field school, it would be very difficult to change farmers' perspectives and the entrenched green revolution way of cultivating crops. The more farmers who understood the new ideas, the more they could convince others of the advantages of adopting the IPM strategy. In order to do that, they had to improve themselves by being able to explain the strategies to their fellow farmers. The recruitment of farmers as trainers became one significant aspect of the programme, although recruiting farmers to be taught as farmer-trainers was not easy. The number was not in a balanced ratio with the growing number of field schools. In addition to this constraint, another problem was the need to keep contact with the IPM farmers, the alumni, after they graduated from the 'schools', and help them to keep up their confidence in the new paradigm. Changing farmers' knowledge, perspectives and practices is not possible in a short time, not in one or even several planting seasons. It became more difficult to sustain the adoption of the new schema of interpretation in an environment where pests and disease outbreak were common, along with the persistent recommendations and sales promotion of various brands of chemical products. I observed the organizers' struggles in facing those constraints. However, they kept moving forward by also organizing various other activities like farmers' studies *(studi-studi petani),* farmers' work-shops and seminars.

In early 2001, my colleagues and I, who did the research in 1998–99, were invited to present our research findings to a seminar organized by the farmers in collaboration with the larger farmers' network IPPHTI at the provincial level. They invited various people, from the governor of the province down to the heads of the villages, as well as the provincial, regional and sub-district agricultural officials, NGOs, local journalists and parliament members. The political environment of regional autonomy and democratization had made them very optimistic and confident enough to use the opportunity to voice their problems to those in power and authority. Unfortunately, many of the important people did not turn up and the farmers were very disappointed. Voicing their problems directly to authorities had become one way to change the existing unfavourable policies and circumstances. This was what they had done when they had had problems, for example, with the increased price of fertilizers and its late delivery in late 1998, and the continuous incorporation of pesticides in the

credit package scheme. These are examples of how, through collective action, they felt stronger to speak out and take action against unwise policies and recommendations (see Winarto *et al.* 2000).

On the other hand, farmers are also in a position of needing help and assistance from those in authority. Even though farmers have indeed experienced an improvement in the ways of seeking alternatives and solutions to their own needs by conducting their own experiments, they have not always had easy access to knowledge, information, materials and financial resources. Therefore, in some respects, if they need help they still rely on other people's assistance and support in dealing with their own needs and problems. In such situations, the nearest people from whom they seek technical know-how, as well as support in material and financial matters, are the agricultural officials at either regional or provincial level. By referring to the governments' diverse responses in dealing with farmers' requests, voices, and problems, it is worth looking at the situations the government at each level has to face.

Since the regional government is now responsible for managing its own resources, the extent to which they are able to use existing resources will vary from one place to another, and from one level of administrative hierarchy to another. Farmers are not at all ignorant of these implications of regional autonomy. They are also familiar with the existing situation of both natural and financial resources in their own region. Will the agricultural officials at the regency level be ready to support them in both financial and technical matters? They know that this is not always the case. Help and assistance can be sought elsewhere, including from those at the higher levels of government, for example at the provincial level. In these situations, however, the farmers' efforts will not always bear fruit. This is because, according to law no. 22/1999, it is now the head of the regency, and not the head of the province, who has the authority to govern his/her region. So even though they may not have the technical know-how or the financial resources to help farmers, the question posed by the regency officials to farmers is: 'Why are we being bypassed in seeking help and assistance?' Hence, farmers may face obstacles and difficulties when they take their own initiative. A group of IPM farmers in South Lampung told me of such a situation. They had proposed a project to carry out 'organic farming' for 250 hectares of crops but instead of seeking help from the agricultural officials at the regency level, they went straight to the provincial level. As one IPM farmer explained:

> The regency is very poor, no resources. But, the agricultural officials at the regency level were angry with us. Why bother? We could also get angry with them. So, we only sent the information, but did not invite them when we had a meeting with the agricultural officials at the provincial level.

Such an explanation reveals not only the constraints the farmers may face in the context of regional autonomy, but also the farmers' courage in taking such an attitude based on confidence in their own decisions. They have learned from the

IPM teaching how to analyse problems, and to take action based on their own analysis of the most advantageous steps to take. These teachings and exercises have improved their confidence and dignity.

These stories reveal that there are advantages within small-scale organizations in assisting local people's empowerment as argued by Constanza *et al.* (2001). The *Wakak Jukok* farmers' group has been able to facilitate changes in their farming culture, strengthen their motivation and self-reliance, solve their own problems, as well as voice their concerns and act against possibly damaging outsider intervention (also see Winarto 2001). Nevertheless there are still detrimental policies and interventions that farmers have to face. In such situations larger networks can be useful in assisting farmers at the grassroots level.

Self-governance across villages: IPPHT

At the end of the last decade (1999) grants from the World Bank to support the IPM programme in Indonesia were terminated. Many actors involved in these programmes were concerned about how they could sustain the programmes without the international funding. At the same time there were growing problems and pressure on farmers from various parties to keep up a green revolution paradigm. Hidayat and Adinata have written that:

> *Indonesian farmers are still treated as an object by many parties.* This situation has occurred because the rights of farmers have been co-opted and stolen by others (government, scientists, technocrats, industry, etc.).
>
> Hidayat and Adinata (2001:4) (emphasis in original)

Several IPM farmers came to the conclusion that they had to do something to strengthen their position. Some 460 IPM farmers from 11 provinces in Indonesia attended a national meeting in Yogyakarta in July 1999. In that meeting, they agreed to form a national alliance which they named: *Ikatan Petani Pengendalian Hama Terpadu Indonesia* (Indonesian pest management farmers' network), which was then widely known by its acronym, IPPHTI. 'This was the organization that was truly based on the IPM farmers' will, [it] genuinely came from my fellows', claimed an IPM farmer from Central Java. As a follow up, meetings were held in other provinces: East Java, Central Java, West Java, Yogyakarta, Lampung, North Sumatra, South Sumatra, Bali, West Nusa Tenggara and South Sulawesi, followed by regency-level meetings within those provinces.

As a symbol of the alliance among IPM farmers, they chose the spider's nest *(jaring laba-laba)*. The nest of a spider, a natural enemy to crop pests or metaphorically the 'farmers' friend', represents the network connecting the IPM farmers throughout Indonesia. 'If one moves, all the others move *(satu bergerak, semua bergerak)*', one IPPHTI representative said in describing the network's

symbol and motto. FIELD Indonesia staff emphasize the basis of the organization as an alliance, not as a 'prism' organization dominated by elites at the top.

The main objectives of this network, which were agreed on at the national meeting, are facilitating farmers' groups at the grassroots level by running strategic activities to overcome unfair conditions, and to struggle for farmers' rights. In relation to the latter, an IPPHTI representative explained that, although the IPPHTI took action to speak up and argue for their rights and problems, their fellow farmers at the grassroots level are those who have to act. On the other hand, if their fellow farmers—in their actions and struggles—need some information, the IPPHTI would help them to find it. They also act as mediators or facilitators in finding financial support and advocacy for the IPM farmers' activities if necessary, that is from farmers' own resources, the regional governments, and various other non-profit/non-government organizations.

Some strategic activities are defined as the IPPHTI national programme:

1 strengthening farmer organizations at the group level
2 improving farmers' education
3 providing advocacy
4 improving gender roles in decision making
5 disseminating news through the farmers' media.

In the first programme, the alliance provides assistance in strengthening IPM farmer-trainers' workshops, organizing workshops for farmer research activities and workshops for advocacy training. In education, assistance is provided to the local farmers' groups in conducting farmer field schools, training of trainers, area planning, action research and other activities in order to improve farmers' ability, knowledge and skill in evaluating problems and opportunities. In advocacy, the alliance also provides assistance to farmers in enabling them to empower themselves and to improve their ability to evaluate and influence the policies affecting the agricultural world and farmers' lives.

A series of dialogues with parliamentary members at the regency level have taken place in many places stretching from Deli Serdang in North Sumatra to Sumbawa in West Nusa Tenggara, and there have been many positive and advantageous outcomes (Hidayat and Adinata 2001:6–7). Recently problems emerged in five regencies in Central Java, where the farmers received financial support through the provincial agricultural staff for the development of a mixed crop of coconut, corn and ground-nuts (assisted by Japanese funds). Farmers encountered strange policies that not only would have led to big losses in their income, but also would have caused pollution to the environment and danger to human health through the use of systemic pesticides included in the aid package. In this case, the IPPHTI staff helped the farmers conduct studies on the use of chemical fertilizers, organic fertilizers, planting distances, cropping patterns and the impacts of chemical pesticides. On the basis of these studies, they came up

with suggestions for a modification of the policy, and voiced these directly to the local parliamentary members. After a series of dialogues and negotiations with various parties, there were finally some changes in the policies (*Media Jaringan Petani Indonesia* 2002b:13).

The most recent of their activities was the IPPHTI's recommendations to the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Trade and Industry to take action to alleviate constraints on agriculture, and hence improve farmers' prosperity (*Kompas* 11 May 2002). Examples of these recommendations to the Minister of Agriculture are to:

1 protect farmers' rights
2 change the extension system toward one that can empower farmers by involving them in the planning, implementation and evaluation stages
3 evaluate the distribution of pesticides which constrain organic farming
4 provide subsidies for agricultural products
5 return and protect seeds that suit local ecological conditions
6 discontinue or halt technological packages that replace local potentials
7 support and protect farmers' efforts in developing 'farmers' science' *(Sains Petani)*.

Hidayat and Adinata (2001:7–8) argue forcefully that farmers still face various problems and obstacles from within the farmers' own communities, as well as from outsiders. For example, there is scepticism toward the new organic paradigm from various parties, including the government and farmers themselves. Government officials continue to maintain the position that farmers are 'stupid'; however, their negative attitude toward the farmers' movement is also coloured by a fear that then farmers might, in fact, become experts. This would then threaten to undermine officials' authority, and they would no longer be able to control the farmers (Hidayat and Adinata 2001). In contrast to the *kelompok tani national andalan* (KTNA), the national farmers' association formed during the New Order regime, the IPPHTI has been perceived by some regional governments as too 'frontal', going too far in demanding their rights *(kebablasan),* or as 'leftist' *(kekiri-kirian)* (Wienarto, personal communication 2002). There were some *bupati* and *dinas pertanian* staff (agricultural officers) who refused to support and collaborate with the IPPHTI, because of the demonstrations that the farmers are always organizing in favour of their policies.

The farmers are not only faced with challenges within the country, but also globally. In the latest movement, in response to the global polices of the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in 2002, farmers tried to speak up on farmers' freedom to decide how they are going to manage their own food crop production. 'Kedaulatan petani dan kedaulatan pangan' ('sovereignty of farmers and their harvests') became the farmers' representatives' latest slogan against ill-defined global policy on food supply, that is through free trade and biotechnology (Juwari *et al.* 2002; Wienarto 2002). Farmers felt that the main

objective of the global policy was the food supply itself, and not the farmers' needs and problems. The representatives of IPPHTI, in collaboration with other NGOs and institutions, organized a discussion to voice their critiques of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa (*Media Jaringan Petani Indonesia* 2002c; also see *Media Jaringan Petani Indonesia* 2002a). The farmers' association also decided to organize a workshop on 'food sovereignty' *(Lokakarya Kedaulatan Pangan)* in 2003 to discuss the problems and to strengthen farmers' role at each stage of food production, from seed provision to marketing. 'A stronger role for farmers is the prerequisite for food sovereignty', said the workshop's coordinator (*Media Jaringan Petani Indonesia* 2002d:15).

By considering the aforementioned positive results and constraints, a further detailed study has to be carried out to examine Agrawal's argument that larger groups have greater success than smaller ones (Agrawal 2000). I argue, instead, that the failure of a group depends not on its size, or form of association, but on the situation each group has to face, and the contextual factors affecting their operation. A larger group or alliance, such as IPPHTI, proves useful in facilitating farmers to move forward in their efforts to regain their dignity and power, and achieve a better life and freedom. This is part of their aim as a 'network' that can facilitate the grassroots groups, which are the bases of their members and their basic units. However, the unfortunate experiences of the farmers prove that changing the existing structures and hierarchy of power is not easy. In some cases, dealing with local governments is much easier than dealing with the higher level bureaucracies, such as the central government, where many more actors are involved 'behind the scenes' with their own hidden interests.

The staff of FIELD Indonesia have raised a current concern about the move toward privatization at the national and international levels. This may affect agriculture and, further on, the life of millions of farmers. Even though the early stages of decentralization are moving toward de-bureaucratization and de-regulation, the main objectives are giving privileges to private owners to gain profits. The motives behind multinational-international support and various programmes in agricultural development, such as the trans-genetic seed engineering, must be questioned. One is led to wonder, if farmers protest against such projects, whether their actions will be as effective and successful as they have been, so far, when they have acted against government policies that try to take sides with private companies' interests. What will happen in the future with 'democratization' and 'regionalization' therefore needs to be watched carefully. The situation is by no means as straightforward as it may first appear.

Conclusion

From the green revolution to integrated pest management, from the New Order regime to the reform and regional autonomy eras; these are periods where farmers in Indonesia have experienced changes in their crop farming strategies.

Many farmers agree that, in recent times, they now have greater room to decide, act and voice their opinions than under the New Order regime, when the green revolution paradigm was paramount. More than anything else it was the introduction of the IPM programme that has allowed for significant change in farmers' knowledge, confidence and practices in finding solutions to their daily problems in crop farming.

The regional autonomy era, which has come one decade after the first introduction of the IPM strategy to farmers in various places in Indonesia, has to some extent created a more 'relaxed' environment for farmers, and has closed the gap somewhat between farmers and the government. Under the recent regime this closer relationship between farmers and the government has enhanced the growth of the 'seeds of knowledge' and the 'seeds of empowerment' among millions of farmers. But it does not mean that the farmers' conflicts among themselves, and constraints from elsewhere, including the government policies and agricultural officers, have vanished. Some cases reveal that farmers have still been placed in the same position as before, that is they remain the 'targets' of various parties who wish to increase their power and authority, or to gain profit.

It is in such situations that grassroots organizations, such as *Wakak Jukok,* and the wider alliance networks, such as IPPHTI, which have started to flourish during the democratization and regional autonomy era, can be helpful. They assist farmers in improving their knowledge and capacity building, while allowing them to consolidate and speak out against injustices and unwise policies. However, the state must play a more significant role in placing these grassroots people as their 'counterparts', and not continue to see them as the 'targets' to achieve the state's objectives. In line with the empowerment paradigm underlying regional autonomy, there is an urgent need to re-examine the state's role in agricultural development, from the centre down to the provincial, regional, sub-district and village levels.

The farmers' organizations at the local level and the wider alliance of farmers are complementary in their efforts to achieve farmers' empowerment and prosperity. The wider network is able to facilitate the local level organizations in education and advocacy, while at the same time consolidating the broader network and pursuing negotiations with others at the provincial, national and international levels. The synergy between the two kinds of organizations has been and will be stronger as an empowered collective entity, rather than as each striving for its own objectives. An assessment of the effectiveness of these two kinds of organization, therefore, has to consider how each kind of collectivity functions and what objectives are being served; what are the problems that each organization addresses; the situation and contextual factors that affect the programmes and movements of each; and their relation and collaboration. Future studies are necessary to examine in detail the contextual factors affecting the success or the failure of farmers' collective action at different levels of organizations, with different size groups, and their interrelations. These become

more significant in the recent era of regional autonomy. The formation of a 'civil society' has allowed much greater space for both grassroots organizations and those at the higher level of the nested hierarchies to move forward and to enable their members to negotiate freely with others. However, the impact of globalization and the influence of foreign actors in agricultural development programmes in Indonesia have to be considered as well. It will be necessary to watch the role that these more international actors will play in an era where they can negotiate directly at the local level. It will also be necessary to observe to what extent these non-local actors will play a role in determining the policies and programmes of agricultural development, the use of farming resources and habitats, and farmers' empowerment movements, all of which may affect the lives of millions of farmers in Indonesia.

Notes

1 This chapter is a revised version of a paper presented at the workshop on the 'Perspectives on Regional Autonomy in a Multicultural Indonesia' held by the Indonesian Study Group (Asia Research Institute), Department of Sociology; and The Southeast Asian Studies programme at the National University of Singapore, 13–15 May 2002, Singapore.
2 FIELD Indonesia is a non-government and non-profit organization that was formed after the termination of the World Bank/USAID project that financially supported the National IPM programme in Indonesia. FIELD Indonesia is a member of the FIELD Alliance in other countries in Asia, an independent regional organization supporting the FAO's Community IPM Programme. It aims to sustain and build upon the achievements of the programmes in Asian countries (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation 2002). The term FIELD is an abbreviation of Farmer Initiatives for Ecological Livelihoods and Democracy.
3 In 1998–99 the organization was known as *Tim PHT Lampung*. PHT is an abbreviation of *Pengendalian Hama Terpadu* (Integrated Pest Management). At one time, the term IPM, an abbreviation of *Ikatan Petani Mandiri* also circulated among farmers. The term *Wakak Jukok* (grassroots) was adopted more recently (in 2000).

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12
Forest resource management and self-governance in regional autonomy Indonesia

Semiarto A.Purwanto

The introduction of law no. 22/1999 on local governance *(Udang-Undang no. 22/1999 mengenai pemerintahan daerah),* which allows local or regional governments to independently manage the natural resources of their territories, has resulted in changes to the utilization of forest resources in various regions in Indonesia. It is these changes that I wish to analyse here to see what the new laws on local governance and regional autonomy have meant to the management and sustainability of forest resource usage.

As a natural resource, the forests in Indonesia were part of many communities' everyday life, which had not only economic, but also social and cultural dimensions. Since their utilization was attached to a community's daily existence, forests could be classified as 'common property' (Hardin 1968). 'Common property' means property is owned by a group of people; it is 'not access open to all but access limited to a specific group of users who hold their rights in common' (McKean 2000:30). McKean *et al.* (1993) and Ostrom *et al.* (1999) talk about the type of changes that have occurred when a 'common resource regime' gets questioned and individual property rights are introduced along with various kinds of partnerships with natural resource managers, such as has happened in Indonesia in the past 30 years or so. Governments have not recognized that 'common property regimes' give *private property rights* to groups of people over 'common pool resources', such as forests and water sources, and that those people therefore hold a stewardship relationship over that property (McKean 2000:34–5).

Instead governments tend to misunderstand 'common property' as 'non-property' and there is a tendency to transform common property arrangements into 'open access' arrangements, which are highly problematic and are most likely to lead to resource depletion (McKean 2000:30). Hence when a 'community' with common property rights becomes incorporated as part of a state, especially within a state that claims control over all of the natural resources —such as Indonesia— these resources change from a community's 'common property' into 'public goods' (Ostrom *et al.* 1999). The state tries to convince all parties that forests should be considered *public property* and that the resources within be seen as 'commodities', which then are designated *public goods* that are controlled by the state. In the end the government could claim that it was entitled

to give over rights or concessions to private companies to utilize these 'public goods'. When the government is strong and highly centralized, control over 'public goods' may be highly exclusively and closely guarded; but when a government is weak and decentralized, 'public goods' will have a tendency to be defined as 'open access' resources, leading to a potential free-for-all in relation to natural resources. As McKean argues (2000:35), communities that have common property rights guard those rights and the natural resources; but once they have been stripped of those rights, they no longer have an incentive to manage the resources for long-term benefits, and they are in competition with others, which means all users attempt to get as much profit as quickly as they can. This is likely to result in massive depletion of the natural resources. In this chapter I will argue that, with unclear laws and unclear management of natural resources, this, indeed, is what is happening to the forests of Indonesia under regional autonomy.

The various examples that will be explored here are those that I came across when I was involved in assessment activities for eco-labelling certificates in various timber companies in Kalimantan, Sumatra and Java. The experience of conducting short-term observations during the period 1996–2002 on the management of over 20 'forestry concession holders' (HPH—*hak penebangan hutan*) and 'plantation forest companies' (HTI—*hutan tanaman industri*), as well as *Perhutani,* the state-owned forest management unit in Java, has helped me to realize that there have been changing dynamics in the management of forestry resources in Indonesia. This chapter is based on these exploratory findings; further study of various management forms would be needed to reach more solid conclusions.

Management of forestry resources during the New Order

For over 30 years, during the New Order of President Suharto (1966–98), the central government took the lead role in development in Indonesia. This role was legitimized through many development strategies that were contained in the 'five year master plans' (*garis-garis besar haluan negara*—GBHN), mandated by the constitution, which decided the direction of development and government programmes. These master plans, which became the icons of national development, had the following characteristics.

1 They were designed by government planning boards: *Bappenas* (*Badan perencanaan nasional*—national development and planning board) in Jakarta, and *Bappeda* (*Badan perencanaan daerah*—regional development and planning board) at the provincial and regional levels.
2 They were published in the form of implementation guidebooks or basic technical manuals.
3 They consisted of basic patterns designed by the planning boards which were to be implemented across all sectors.

These features are all characteristic of the centralistic and top-down approach dominant in Suharto's Indonesia, where the role of the central government was very dominant in determining planning programmes and the size of the budgets, as well as success indicators. Those activities that did not conform to these programmes were considered subversive. With the military behind the New Order government, development was not only centralistic and top-down in nature, it was also intimidating.

The paradigm of national development as outlined above can be seen in all sectors, including the management of forestry resources. In development programmes at the beginning of the New Order era, forestry was associated with farming programmes that were under the direction of the Department of Agriculture. Realizing the huge potential of the forestry sector, however, in 1978 the central government created a separate Department of Forestry. The dominant role that the central government came to play in the management of forestry resources was done in the name of development, but was also justified by the constitution, which states that the nation controls the natural resources needed by the majority of its people. In other words the forests went from being common property, which was part of the community, to being defined as 'public goods'.

During the New Order era, therefore, the central government's role in managing the forests, in the framework of the national development paradigm, was substantiated by the formation of the Department of Forestry. A national level department, its policies were implemented at the local level through the department's regional offices (*kantor wilayah* or *Kanwil*) in each province. The regional offices were given broad authorities to define and approve areas for production, to determine logging volumes for timber companies, as well as to undertake supervisory roles. The local governments channelled their forestry concerns through the offices of the forestry agencies—*dinas kehutanan* (hereafter referred to as *dinas*)—at the provincial, regency and village levels. With this arrangement, most of the benefits from the forest were reaped by the central government, while the local governments, at the provincial and regency levels, received smaller benefits.[1]

Forestry management activities were conducted by awarding concession rights, or forest product utilization rights, in this case timber, to businessmen/developers or institutions appointed by the government. In Java there are no forests remaining that can be categorized as 'natural production forests'. Instead there are timber estates, where teak is the main product. The institution authorized to operate these estates is *PT Perhutani* (The Forestry Corporation of Indonesia). *Perhutani* is a state-owned company, which inherited the plantation forest business pioneered by the Dutch colonial government more than a century ago. The forestry management unit in Java, under *Perhutani,* was divided into various compartments that managed all the teak plantations in Java.

Outside of Java, the story of forestry management differs. The state does not manage the forest resources directly, but grants concessions to developers. The awarding of concessions is made possible through the sections of the constitution

which legitimize the state control of natural resources, as stated above. Therefore, because the state 'owns' natural resources, and has the right to give access to these resources, forests end up being closer to the outsiders who control them than to the communities that live in the surrounding area. Through the paradigm of national law, all local regulations and customs became irrelevant, so that property rights according to local customs were not operational anymore. Once the state legally controlled the forests, all business activities could be delegated to any parties the state wished. In this case, the utilization of forest products was given to developers through concession, known in Indonesia as 'forestry concession rights' or *hak penebangan hutan* (HPH); companies with HPH concessions are known as an HPH company or an HPH for short. These HPH companies could log allocated areas, the size of which were determined by a ministerial decree, while the annual logging quotas were determined by the Department of Forestry's regional offices.

The concessions obtained by the HPH were massive in size, ranging from 30, 000 hectares to 100,000 hectares. An HPH developer, if he managed his businesses well, could obtain other HPH concessions, so there were developers who controlled hundreds of thousands of hectares of forests. The forestry business remains a lucrative business; every tree cut down means extra income. To control logging so as not to exceed the set limits, the government needed to monitor developers' every activity. To this end, during the New Order, there was a standard system of silviculture, which prohibited developers from cutting trees with a diameter of less than 50 cm and required them to replant the area that has been logged.

Despite the existence of such a system, logging done by the HPH concession holders, in addition to thefts and forest fires, meant hundreds of thousands of hectares of forests are now in critical condition. The government imposed fees on the HPH concession holders to pay for forestry damage and other compensation fees, called the 'reforestation fund' (*dana reboisasi*—DR). This fund was meant to be the government's budget to repair the damaged environment. However there are few reports of the use of this reforestation fund for actual reforestation, while there are many reports of the use of the fund for other activities outside the forestry sector.

Over the years, after observing the fast rate of deforestation, and due to the pressures of creditor countries on Indonesia, the government introduced a different forestry management policy. Under the new policy, concessions where the land was in critical condition were given to developers. These concession holders replanted the critical lands with timber plantations. This policy was called the 'industrial plantation forest concession' (*hak pengusahaan hutan tanaman industri* or *hutan tanaman industri,* which are known as HPHTI or HTI for short). Differently from the HPH concessions, the developers of the HTI concessions cannot immediately gain profit from the resources under their control, since they must invest first in the planting of an empty area, and can only harvest it afterwards. Unlike the government forest estates controlled by *Perhutani* on

Java, where teak has always been the major timber harvested and maintained, these timber estates plant fast growing, 'soft wood' trees. Most commonly this was *acacia mangium,* used in the pulp and paper industry. Therefore apart from the initial investment to plant the trees, the developers also often invested in a pulp factory. The government provided substantial credit incentives at low rates to these types of developers.

During the New Order era, when HPH and HTI concessions were common, the communities living in the surrounding area were given almost no role in the management of forest resources. Their roles were mostly limited to working for an HPH company or *Perhutani*. The people living near the forests had restricted access to the forests and forest products; they were only permitted to take non-timber forest products and a limited amount of wood for personal use. But if the wood was subsequently sold, it would be categorized as illegal logging. The market price of such timber would be very low.

Actually all HPH and HTI developers entered into a *forestry agreement* at the time that they were granted their HPH/HTI concessions. This agreement committed them to help in the development of the local communities in the forest area. In 1992 this regulation became stricter with a creation by the Department of Forestry of a new programme, called the 'development of the forest communities' (*pembangunan masyrakyat daerah hutan*—PMDH). Proof of participation in this programme, by helping the forest communities, became one of the conditions that had to be met before the HPH/HTI concession holders could renew their annual logging licences. This programme followed the blueprint for developments in other sectors; the major difference was that the implementation was carried out not by government bureaucrats but by the HPH/HTI concession holders. Interestingly, the basic thrust of the PMDH programme was the attempt to wean the communities away from dependency on forest resources, and, if possible, to develop an alternative economy for them that was located outside the forests. In short, there seemed to be an effort, intentional or not, to persuade the communities surrounding the forests not to cultivate the forests at all, especially in terms of cutting wood for sale on the market.

The two main agencies in the management of forests during the New Order in Indonesia, the HPH developers and the government, appeared to be the ideal partners. The government needed the developers to cultivate the forests to generate income through taxes, retributions and other sources. One could say that this system turned the forests into a government 'savings account', which they could withdraw from at any time. On the other hand, developers enjoyed their roles as the sole authorized logging operators; they could cut down the trees, sell the timber and obtain profits from the enterprise. Thus forestry management activities during the New Order era built a common understanding between the developers and the government (through the Department of Forestry or the forestry agencies). The developers followed all the government regulations faithfully and tried to meet the annual logging quotas determined each year by the government. The government, on the other hand, enjoyed services, taxes and

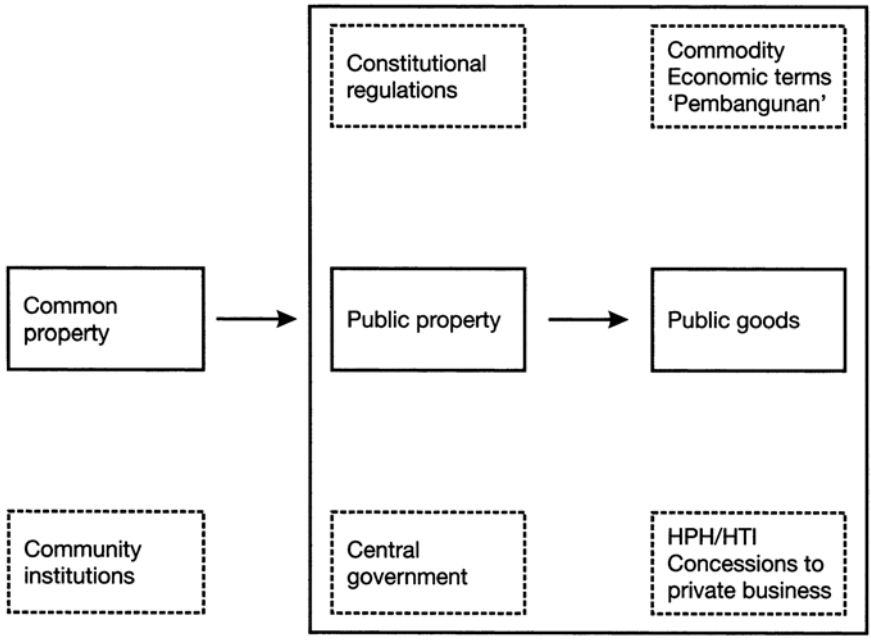

Figure 12.1 The forest resource regime during the New Order era.

retributions from the developers. Government authority, and the dependency of the developers on government good will, was evident in frequent cases where government officials forced developers to provide funds to support their activities. It was no secret that if certain events at the national or regional levels were planned (such as sporting events, party congresses, national conferences etc.), developers would have to provide funds outside the ordinary taxes and retributions. For forest developers this meant they had to do extra logging outside the annual stated quota. When this occurred, the regional officers, as supervisors, turned a blind eye to the over-capacity logging. These collusive practices appeared to be a win-win solution for both the government and the developers concerned.

A very different story is reported on the relations between the HPH concession holders and the surrounding communities. During the early 1970s the HPH developers opened many logging areas adjacent to people who lived in or around the forests, communities who were hunter-gatherers or swidden farmers. The tensions that surfaced were often in relation to the rotational use of hunting grounds or fallowing fields by the local people, a type of use that allowed developers to claim that the land was 'empty' and unutilized, and thus available for them. These conflicts were usually resolved through formal legal means, where the local people were confronted with the reality that what they had always

considered to be their land had actually become the property of someone else. This formal approach was fully supported by the government apparatus, both the bureaucracy and the military. In the 1990s, however, due to rising criticism both domestic and international, this bureaucratic, legalistic approach was changed into a more welfare-oriented approach, with the introduction of the PMDH programme mentioned above. However, because of the top-down nature of the PMDH approach it was often not successful and instead caused a lot of tension, because not all the villages in the surrounding communities could be included or involved in these programmes.[2]

The model of natural resource control and management that was applied during the New Order era can be seen in Fig. 12.1.

This model illustrates how forests, which had previously been 'common property', through legislation became defined as 'public property' and a resource that could be utilized for the benefit of the entire country. This was based on the interpretation of the forest as a 'commodity'. As a commodity, economically, forests could fund various development programmes. The managers of these resources were no longer the community—via a collection of cultural institutions—but instead the state. The state, as the authority in control of natural resources, allocated concessions to developers through the HPH/HTI concessions. Thus the forests were no longer considered common property to be managed together, but became 'publicly-owned'. They were no longer viewed as 'forest' per se, but instead in terms of the economic value of their 'forestry content', or what they could produce. The economic context constructed the forest as 'timber', with an economic value, which in turn makes the forest a 'public good'.

Management of forestry resources in the regional autonomy era

The local governance, or regional autonomy, legislation has given a wider opportunity for provincial-level and regency-level governments to act more assertively as the main actors in the management of forest resources in their region. The application of 'autonomy' in managing forestry resources in different regions of Indonesia, however, indicates actually a similar pattern to that of the New Order. That is, the role of the government is still dominant but control has now been decentralized to the provincial and regency levels. The provincial-level governments decide general policies, while the regency-level governments execute them.

There are many tensions that have emerged in forestry management because of decentralization. Major tugs-of-war have surfaced between various government levels—between the central and regional governments, as well as between provincial and regency governments. There are actually no clear laws and regulations which can become operational at the forestry management level in terms of use, or in terms of ownership. These ambiguities lead to multiple tensions and conflicts.

During the New Order era, as outlined above, the government's interests in forest resources were represented by the Department of Forestry regional offices at the provincial level, while the forestry agencies represented the interests of the local governments. When the regional autonomy legislation took effect in 2001, the interests of the central government suddenly were disrupted because of the interpretation that local governments had a greater right to manage the region's assets. Provinces rushed to establish rules to manage natural resources. Riau and East Kalimantan provinces were two of the earliest provinces to create their own complete set of regulations to manage natural resources, including mining and forestry. Under the regional autonomy legislation, however, the regency level is the most important party that determines how and who has the right to manage resources. This has created a climate with reference to 'public goods' in which ambiguity can flourish and competition between government levels thrive.

In East Kalimantan, for example, the regional government created a policy whereby regency-level governments have the authority to issue permits to the public to manage small-scale forest areas of around 100 hectares. While in Central and East Java, the regencies are preparing to classify *Perhutani* as a regional-asset corporation. The plan is to change the status of ownership from the central government to the regency-level government. From a *badan usaha milik negara* (BUMN) or a 'state-owned company', *Perhutani* will be transformed into *badan usaha milik daerah* (BUMD), or 'local government-owned company'. HPH/HTI concessions are still held by developers, but they must obey the regulations set out by the regional governments at the provincial and regency *(kabupaten)* levels. The national level policies are taken as general guidelines, which are not directly operational; they need to be translated into regional-level policies.

Against this background lies the problem of Indonesia's international relations, which puts the central government in conflict with the regional governments. The central government still has to deal with the debts of the New Order era, and has been forced to borrow again to cope with the economic crisis that Indonesia has been experiencing since 1997. It is thus now under great pressure to follow the wishes of creditor countries (Kartodihardjo 1999). Some of the requests of donor countries in the forestry sector are to introduce principles of sustainable forest management, to reduce the bureaucracy, and to pay more attention to the welfare of people living in the surrounding villages. These demands mean that logging activities must be restricted and planned carefully. If they can achieve this, the central government will receive debt relief, or even new credit.

On the other hand, the regional governments, which have now the opportunity to manage their own natural resources, are interested in fewer restrictions and less control, and want to cut timber to sell so as to raise their 'real regional income' (*pendapatan asli daerah* or PAD). The PAD issue at the provincial level becomes more complicated, as every regency is seeking a high level of PAD through exploiting existing natural resources. The importance of regional income in the autonomy era is due to the fact that the central government will no longer

allocate funding for local development and thus the local government has to seek and provide the capital on its own. In this case, natural resource exploitation is seen as one answer to that problem.

This tug-of-war between these inter-governmental interests has resulted in policies formulated at the national level often not being reflected at the regional level. This has made forestry business operators uncertain as to which set of rules they must follow. The regulations relating to sustainability, issued by the central government and supported by the Department of Forestry regional offices, often contradict the policies on logging volumes or policies about developing new logging areas issued by the regional governments. Unclear regulations that must be followed by forestry developers have caused many parties to ignore all the rules. It has suddenly become unclear who has the rights to control and supervise the forests. These conditions have become very profitable for those parties who seek quick profits from the forestry business.

In addition to the competition over forest management at the various government levels, there is also the uncertainty created as to the rights of communities living in or near the forests. Decentralization to the regions was preceded by policy and political reformation. In the name of reformation and the return of the mandate to the people, the regional governments have raced to create populist policies. The speed at which decentralization was implemented after the end of the New Order has created an atmosphere marked by ineffectiveness and a consequent inability to implement government policies and regulations. The public can see that, nowa-days, when policies have not been thought out sufficiently, and when the government apparatus is unable to act decisively, there are wide-open opportunities for them to get involved in the business of managing natural resources. The public feel they have the right, and are no longer afraid, to attempt to procure forest products. This has meant they now try, through both legal means, such as making land or area-ownership claims, and illegal means such as theft, to gain control of forests or forest products.

The regional governments tried to anticipate the chaos that might occur if multiple claims were to surface; they have given ownership priority to cooperatives and have started granting communal development rights. Meeting individual claims might lead to a proliferation of similar claims from other individuals, which could create a lot of problems. Granting of communal rights instead was justified by the resurgence of local customs or *adat,* repressed for many years under New Order national law. At the beginning of reformation in 1998–99, there were many movements to return to local customs as a means to resolve cases justly, while paying attention to the concerns of marginalized groups. This has increasingly been deemed a better alternative to the inefficiency of national law.

The most significant problem, however, for managing forest resources in the regional autonomy era, is not the conflicting claims over the land and forests, but instead the problem of theft. Very high levels of theft have occurred, with huge

losses of unknown quantities of trees. For example, a large HPH, with a concession area of 120,000 hectares in Central Kalimantan, lost approximately 15,000 cubic metres of timber from its region in 2001. In a *Perhutani* estate in Kebonharjo, Central Java, the theft of teak wood has reached tens of thousands of cubic metres, exceeding the 2001 annual allowable cut. These large thefts do not just occur in HPH/HTI and *Perhutani* areas, but also in national reserves and park areas.

It is difficult to obtain information about the identities of these thieves, their networks, or their operations. However there are strong indications that some of the theft activities are connected to the military and law enforcement institutions. For example, one of the staff at the *Perhutani* in Madiun, East Java, mentioned that around the time of the attack on the Indonesian Democratic Party office at Jalan Diponegoro in 1996, the number of timber thefts suddenly increased significantly. The suspicion that the military was involved in these timber thefts increased after the police were unable to apprehend and bring to trial the people behind the thefts. The seized stolen timber was left to rot in police custody, rather than used as evidence to apprehend the guilty parties. Similarly the Central and Eastern Java *Perhutani* estates have experienced a considerable rise in theft of teak wood since the beginning of reform. Many believe that the military operations throughout Java—deployed to safeguard the country from the many demonstrations that have multiplied since the *reformasi* began—are behind the thefts.

During this time when timber thefts have become one dominant activity in the utilization of forest products, the surrounding communities living near the forests again become the hapless victims. The forests surrounding them are damaged and looted by thieves who are mostly not from their region. At several HPH concession areas in Central and Eastern Kalimantan, the thieves are known not to have originated from the surrounding villages. Most of them are newcomers who arrived as labourers organized by the concession owners to supply wood to the sawmills. Many of these labourers originated from East Java, and they later stayed on in the two provinces concerned. In *Perhutani*'s case, surrounding villagers admit that small-scale thefts are often committed by them, but say they are not responsible for the large-scale thefts, where trucks openly enter the estates both during the daylight and night-time hours.

The model of how forest resource management in Indonesia has been transformed from the New Order era to the autonomy era is shown in Fig. 12.2. The six boxes on the left explain how the transformation from common property to public property ended up with the change to forest products becoming 'commodities' that happened in the New Order era. When *reformasi* occurred, that transformation, which was supposed to be more beneficial to the local community, ended up being in many ways similar to the situation in the New Order. Forests that had been 'common property' are still 'public property', but with different parties involved. Prior to *reformasi,* the central government held the power, now it is the local governments through local policies. But due to the

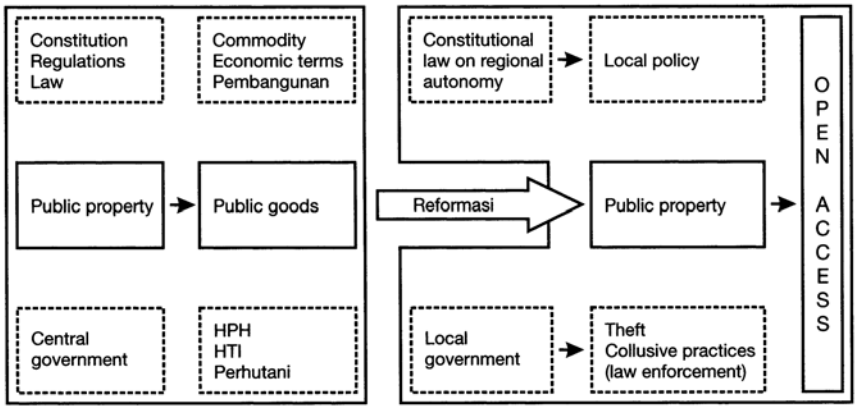

Figure 12.2 The transformation of the forest resource regime from New Order to autonomy eras.

lack of control and weak management, the local policies tend to produce collusive practices involving the local government and local entrepreneurs. This condition is worsened by the thefts that happen as a result of these weak governments. As McKean argued (2000:34– 5), when 'common property' regimes over common pool resources are undermined, the resulting situation can end up as 'open access'. This is because the local communities no longer have management rights or incentives to treat the resources in a sustainable way and, as is the case in Indonesia, it is unclear who really holds the power to manage these resources. Even though the local governments are supposed to have taken control, incidences of rampant theft by some community-and military-backed groups, conflicts between locals and entrepreneurs, and disagreements between various government levels mean that everyone and no one seem to be in control of the situation.

Toward fairer common property management: is regionalism the answer?

Looking at the analysis above, it is difficult to see how forestry management in Indonesia can ever be made sustainable. During the New Order era, the government formulated policies that made the forests economic commodities. Now in the regional autonomy era, these economic commodities are being treated as open access resources.

One of the biggest critiques of the New Order era's model of development regards the centralistic nature of the planning and execution of programmes. With a centralistic model several things are problematic:

1 the community's participation at the lower levels in development is missing

2 there are low levels of community independence
3 local institutions are weakened
4 there is a reduction of individual initiatives because all directions are clearly laid out to ensure the success of the programmes.

As James Wunsch (1999:244) has said, centralized, hierarchical and bureaucratic administrative models fail because they reflect an urban and wealth-biased political economy, which takes a heavy toll on the poor. He argues that if authority and resources are devolved to autonomous local authorities, decentralization might neutralize some of the commonly accepted problems of the centralized government model. Hence some people see that the solution to these problems is in offering an opportunity for lower-class people to actively be involved in the planning and operation of development activities. Also, the authority to formulate policies and manage development programmes or other policies must be decentralized to the regional levels, and not all decided by the central government.

The implementation of the local governance law was meant to be a solution to two problems at once: providing opportunities to local communities and lower-class people to present their aspirations, and giving the regional governments the chance to do more for the interests of their constituents with respect to needs at the local level. The bias of the legislation toward the interests of the regional populations is in reality an indication that the public is expected to raise their bargaining position against the state.

However the cases that I have observed show there is not yet any significant progress by the regional autonomy legislation in generating local control over natural resources. Once the state's position was weakened, represented by the central government's reduced control over forestry management, what surfaced were individual and collective claims demanding ownership of various forest lands. These claims were based on local indigenous customs, which had been undermined earlier in the New Order by national law. Although the spirit of the regional autonomy legislation is on the side of the people, in terms of ownership claims on forestry resources their bargaining power is still weak. Therefore, whenever there is a boundary conflict, the HPH/HTI developers, with their concession rights based in national law, continue to win the legal cases. It is not surprising that, in some cases, people have felt they are left with no choice but to take the HPH employees hostage, seize companies' assets, or obstruct the flow of timber out of the forests.

A form of settlement that is currently often offered to local communities is a *hutan kemasyarakatan*—a 'community forest'—a part of the forest that is given to the community within a HPH concession. This concept is derived from the 'social forestry' programmes that were introduced by *Perhutani* already back in the 1980s.[3] Through social forestry programmes, people had been encouraged to plant vegetation in the forest area, so that they could benefit from the forest while *Perhutani* continued to maintain control of the land. These community

forest programmes appear to be a kind of win-win solution for the people, since they can claim a parcel of land in a concession area. The concessionaire gives them the right to manage the land and acknowledges their rights to control it, while suggesting the kinds of activities to be engaged in by the people in the area (Kristanto 2001). However, these 'community forests' are only surrendered to communities who have strong evidence of ownership, and therefore there have not been many successful cases of local people gaining control over these community forests.

One recent innovation, created by some regional governments such as in East Kalimantan, is to permit a community to manage small-scale forestry areas of around 100 hectares. These must be managed collectively through a cooperative. Because of the regency's autonomy, a regent has the authority to grant 'forest product utilization rights' (*hak pengelolaan hasil hutan*—HPHH) to a cooperative whose members are the local community. In reality, due to limited funds and limited technical ability to manage the forest, these cooperatives normally hand over their rights to capital owners or to the HPH developers in the form of partnerships.[4] In these cases the regional governments have acted as the regulator of natural resources and the forests have now become the grounds for developers and the public, through cooperatives, to earn money together. Simmons and Schwartz-Shea (1993:8), however, suggest that it is preferable, when creating institutions to arrange common use of particular resources, that people should not have to wait for a formal institution which relies on the power of the state. Instead groups can be formed and partnerships created through existing informal institutions, based on cultural or other kinds of group identity.

The latest discussion on the issue of regional autonomy and the rights of the community is the re-emergence of *masyarakat adat* or 'adat society', which refers to the traditional local communities, instead of the *desa* or villages that were created during the New Order for administrative and political purposes. Lounela *et al.* (2002) have published some perspectives on their re-emergence with special emphasis on agrarian laws, while Noer (2001) and Bachriadi (2001) have discussed how civil organizations have set up agendas for the return to *adat*. These studies have put their focus on what was changed during the New Order regime, in terms of ownership and control over land and resources, when national law replaced village law. With the new regional autonomy laws, the central government control has been loosened and civil society and the community are in a better position to fight for the return of local authority to manage local resources.

It is imperative that steps be taken to avoid a tragedy of forestry management that will result in the total disappearance of the forests. With the present idea that the forests are 'public goods', coupled with a weak adherence to existing regulations that results in open access to all, and the increase of uncontrolled logging, the forests of Indonesia are in great danger. The granting of autonomy to the regions could have some positive and fairer outcomes, but so far this has been only limited. It is not enough to have local control and autonomy, if people

do not also have an awareness of the necessity that resources must be made sustainable. This notion of sustainability, which has emerged in the past two decades, has encouraged people to move away from looking at resources only in an economic light. Instead there has been some concern to focus on ecology and how resources can be sustained to support the welfare of the surrounding communities.

A fairer form of resource management must fulfil the above conditions. From the entrepreneurial point of view, there must be a re-definition of the types of companies allowed to exploit the forests, so that they will not only prioritize the business aspects, but also the ecological and social aspects. The main issue in this discourse is the existence of *equity* to all stakeholders, who are concerned in the management of resources so that they can all *participate* optimally. The equity principle, and this participation in forestry management, has found its justification in community-based forest management and co-adaptive forestry management.

Community-based forest management is an alternative forest management popularized by NGOs in Indonesia concerned with environmental issues. This form of management suggests that the forests should be managed in the way that communities surrounding the forest want. The planning, implementation and utilization of the forest products are developed according to the community's wishes.[5] Attempts to apply this idea have been fraught with difficulty, however, since each stakeholder has a different agenda which must be accommodated at the same time. As Gibson *et al.* (2000:240–1) have argued, when many parties are involved in resource management, it is more difficult to organize them. In this situation, having sufficient autonomy in a region to develop local rules or institutions that suit that area is an important prerequisite. A participatory approach in forest management will also be needed. *Perhutani,* as the forestry business pioneer in Indonesia, has tried to follow this idea by changing their management orientation from a command style to a more community-oriented one. Since 2001, *Perhutani* has applied the strategy of 'forestry development in collaboration with the community' (*pengelolaan hutan bersama masyarakat*—PHBM), which is similar to the idea of community-based forest management. However, there is a significant difference between 'collaboration with the community' and 'community-based'. *Perhutani* still shows a reluctance or distrust toward the more community-oriented approach, which would give *Perhutani* less control over the forests. An HTI company in South Sumatra also adopted this *Perhutani* version of the PHBM principle. These two examples show that neither the state nor the developers has yet completely relinquished their control of forestry resources to the community.

Efforts must be maintained, however, to keep innovating means by which concerned stakeholders in the management of forestry in Indonesia can stand together and divide the rights and obligations fairly. A participatory way (Gibson *et al.* 2000), which accommodates all stakeholders in a partnership programme

(Poncelet 2001:275), and an attempt to continually build proper institutions (Ostrom and Ostrom 1999), must serve as a paradigm for these efforts.

Notes

1 Zakaria (1994) has described the actions and policies of the government through *Kanwil* and *dinas* that led to the decline of the local communities' rights in the forests' welfare.
2 Peluso (1990, 1992) and Zakaria (1994) show how both in Java and elsewhere, the government's policies on forestry were very detrimental to the living conditions of people located in or near forests.
3 These programmes were actually derived from colonial era policies when the government had created a 'buffer zone' outside of the production areas to be planted by the local residents. *Perhutani* adapted this policy in the 1980s when Jamaluddin Suryohadiskusumo, the former minister of forestry, was the director of *Perhutani*. The social forestry programme allowed people to plant some horticultural products within *Perhutani* teak forest areas. Nowadays, the difference seems to be that people do not just want the land to cultivate, they also want access to the teak.
4 The idea of granting a concession to a small group of people to involve them in forest management, to ensure they have benefit from the resource, is not always fully and efficiently worked out. A comparative study from Agrawal (2000:74–7) indicates that larger groups tend to be more successful rather then smaller ones because of the lack of capital, low technology input and security. Similar reasons seem to be behind the difficulties of working in cooperatives in the HPHH in East Kalimantan. There also may be problems in larger groups, however, as is pointed out by Gibson *et al.* (2000:232) who argue that bigger groups are more likely to be heterogeneous and this will be detrimental to self-organization.
5 Co-adaptive forestry management is a concept first introduced in Indonesia by CIFOR (Center for Indonesian Forestry), an approach toward a natural resource management that must accommodate stakeholders' roles and interests (see CIFOR Annual Report 1999 for further discussions about these two approaches).

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